

FREE

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk October 2, 2016

Mid edition No 732

CRIME

Life term for brutal Blackman murder

Killer faces minimum of 28 years behind bars

HEALTH

Ambulance service faces fresh crisis

CQC set to plunge it into special measures

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There's more at stake than simple economics

A FEW weeks ago, we ran an extensive article on the impact of DfLs (Down from Londoners) on our coastal towns.

The very crux of the argument was a growing concern among those who have long since lived and worked in these towns, that there was simply too much focus being placed on pulling in the DfLs and their perceived disposable incomes, and not enough focusing on them.

Of course, seaside towns rely on visitors - they rely, effectively, on tourism being a major economic boost to them; to swell the coffers all year round. But there is a fine line to be drawn between that, and the desire to attract those from out-of-town at the expense of those who call it home.

This week, we hear that Canterbury City Council is so concerned about the marketing and resulting popularity of Whitstable's annual oyster

festival, it is to dramatically scale it back.

In truth, Whitstable's revival is pretty much complete. House prices have gone through the roof and it is a rare fine day when the place isn't busy.

But for what is a small town, the influx of 60,000 people is significant. And for anyone who lives there, it means they cannot dare risk driving anywhere in the knowledge that if they seek a parking place on their return they will find, instead, only Land Rovers with Islington resident permits in the window.

Mix in those who come down simply to drink, shout and litter, and suddenly it becomes a rather toxic mix.

Granted, the city council's decision - were we to be cynical - is no doubt influenced heavily by their restricted budgets, but for locals it may generate a precious sigh of relief. At

least their mounting concerns appear to have been recognised.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

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Road concerns as garden city plans taking shape

By Simon Allin

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IMPROVED roads are needed in north Kent if the Ebbsfleet Garden City is to deliver to its full potential, a council leader has warned.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) this week announced the creation of a new commercial centre around Ebbsfleet International Station, and 15,000 homes within 15 years. It is expected to create 30,000 jobs.

The 45,000 sq m of commercial space is expected to become a magnet for new businesses, education, research and development enterprises, and leisure and recreation.

Dartford council leader Jeremy Kite said he believed firms would be eager to move to the site, but added that adequate investment in infrastructure needs to take place to support existing communities.

"We have got a huge investment in the station, and if we are going to have growth it should be right by the station," he told KoS.

"One of the bigger issues is local roads and how it will affect existing communities. We have to



PLANS: Artist's impressions of how Ebbsfleet Garden City will look

make sure the investment in roads happens.

"We need a new crossing at Ebbsfleet and two new junctions at Bean. What I really want is for the junctions to be built and then we will have the capacity for growth."

In addition to the commercial space, the EDC has revealed there will be upgrades to the Fastrack bus system so that 90 per cent of garden city residents will live within five minutes of a stop.

New pedestrian bridges and walk and cycle ways will connect Swanscombe, Northfleet and Greenhithe with the rest of the garden city as eight new urban villages are established alongside existing communities.

There will also be seven new city parks, a series of open spaces along the River Ebbsfleet and new promenade walks along the River Thames.

Earlier this year, Labour leader

Jeremy Corbyn slammed the speed of the development at Ebbsfleet, saying: "They've made 30 Ebbsfleet announcements and they've managed to build 368 homes – it's 12 homes for every press release."

But an EDC spokesperson pointed out that there will be 5,100 homes built in the garden city by the end of this parliament.

A series of open days will be held across the area in October to help inform the public about the plans.

Public meeting held to discuss merger of five of our local authorities

FURTHER details of plans to merge five local authorities in the east of the county and create one 'super council' will be revealed at a public meeting this week.

It emerged earlier this year that leaders of Thanet, Canterbury, Ashford, Dover and Shepway have taken part in a "series of discussions" about options for closer collaboration between one another.

It comes in the light of continued slashing of local government budgets, putting enormous strain on each district and borough council.

Now the plans appear to be accelerating with Canterbury City Council leader Simon Cook and chief executive Colin Carmichael set to field questions from the public at an event at the Guildhall.

The potential merger is part of an exploration of how services can be best delivered across the three tiers of local government – county, district and towns and parishes – to ensure the most accessible and efficient

services for the public.

The move was backed in principle by Kent County Council leader Paul Carter and Thanet North MP Sir Roger Gale, who told us he wants to see KCC scrapped as an entity, and replaced with three unitary councils across the county.

Cllr Cook said ahead of the meeting: "We know there is public interest in this issue, and although we are still some way from understanding whether the merger is viable, we want to explain to people how we've got to this position and what happens next."

"It's important to stress this is not a consultation event. We'll be happy to hear views and answer questions, but it is just an informal session."

It is thought a decision on whether to formally pursue some sort of joint working or merger could be made within six to 12 months.

No booking is required to attend this week's event which takes place at 7pm next Thursday, October 6.

Praise be! Cathedral handed £13.8m lottery cashpot

CANTERBURY Cathedral has been given a multi-million pound grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), allowing it to start work on £24.7m worth of restoration and improvement projects.

The HLF awarded it £13.8m which is being added to £10.9m already raised by the Canterbury Cathedral Trust, its charitable arm.

Among other projects, it means

over the next five years the leaking roof above the cathedral nave will be replaced and, subject to planning permission, visitors to the cathedral will be greeted at a new welcome centre, opening onto the city's Buttermarket.

Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, the Very Rev Dr Robert Willis said: "This is without doubt a very exciting time for the cathedral."

Works to spark 'long delays' in Maidstone town centre

MOTORISTS are being warned to expect 'long delays' in the centre of Maidstone this week while work takes place on deep construction and drainage works.

There will be peak and off-peak lane closures on the Maidstone Bridge from Monday after the peak morning rush hour, lasting until 6am on Wednesday morning.

Traffic from Fairmeadow onto

the bridge will be restricted to two lanes.

Traffic heading onto Bishops Way will be restricted to one lane.

Traffic travelling across St Peters Bridge heading towards the High Street and Bishops Way, where the work is taking place, will be restricted to one lane.

Motorists are urged to consider alternative routes.



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Dartford Crossing disruption during the week

MOTORISTS travelling from the county into Essex overnight next week are set to face disruption at the Dartford Crossing.

Starting from Monday, October 3, the northbound east tunnel will be closed from 8.30pm to 5.30am for improvement works.

On Friday the tunnel is set to close from 9pm to 5.30am.

The following night the northbound west tunnel will be closed from 8.30pm to 6am, while on Sunday night the east tunnel will be closed again from 8.30pm to 5.30am.

The QEII Bridge will have three (of four) lanes closed, overnight, between 10pm and 5.30am, from Monday for five nights.

Wells makes Dreamland and Manston vow while green spaces face sell-off

Exclusive: By Tom Pyman

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THE Ukip leader of Thanet District Council says he expects ongoing rows over both Dreamland and Manston Airport to be "fixed within weeks".

Chris Wells made the vow after the authority came under fire from South Thanet MP Craig Mackinlay this week when the cabinet agreed to put the potential sale of green spaces to public consultation.

"Things will start moving quickly. I expect both Dreamland and Manston to be fixed within weeks," Cllr Wells told KoS, after rubbing salt in the council's wounds had anything to do with the financial woes of the heritage park, as suggested by Mr Mackinlay.

Cllr Wells confirmed the move was necessary to support the council's capital programme as it only had a budget of £600,000 to spend on 600 properties, therefore steps had to be



PROMISE: Chris Wells

taken to reduce expenditure and help balance the books.

The Conservative MP tried to drum up local support by encouraging residents to attend what he described as a "shadowy" extraordinary

cabinet meeting and said: "We all know that after the debacle of Dreamland the council has debts to pay but a firesale of our precious green spaces is no way to fill it."

However, Cllr Wells told us: "Whether Dreamland was there or not, we would have to do this."

"Craig sent out hundreds of letters paid for by the House of Commons and demanded people turn up but could not be there himself because he was on a taxpayer-funded jolly to Hungary."

A source close to Mr Mackinlay confirmed he was out of the country at a "two-day trade delegation".

Within hours of the meeting, more than a thousand people signed a petition pledging to "stop Thanet District Council disposing of any land without a full public consultation".

Cllr Wells added: "Each of those 1,000 people should individually write to him expressing their dissatisfaction with the situation so we can collate those comments for presentation to a future cabinet."



IMAGE: Brewer's new look

Fresh look as Sheps reveals its rebrand

SHEPHERD Neame is to roll out a new look across all its pubs, restaurants and its famous Faversham brewery.

The rebranding will see the familiar red signs replaced with a new look.

And that will mean changes to the signage on its 330 pubs and hotels and its beer brands.

The brewery's distinctive crook motif has a more 'premium' look, say the design team behind it, and now reflects its association with Kent's famous hops.

The brand refresh was developed by Tunbridge Wells-based creative agency JDO Brand & Design which has previously helped the world's oldest brewer breathe new life into its Spitfire Ale, Master Brew and Whistable Bay drinks.

JDO creative director Ray Smith said: "We've taken inspiration from the brewery's provenance, borrowing the rich and vibrant colours of Kent for the new identity."

"The brand identity is such an important asset for the business and we believe we've articulated the values and personality of this iconic British business."

Shepherd Neame chief executive, Jonathan Neame added: "The project covers all aspects of this diverse company and articulates our brand positioning and the company's strategic ambitions."

Jail for drug dealer of heroin and crack

A LONDON-based drug dealer who supplied heroin and crack cocaine in Tunbridge Wells has been jailed after pleading guilty in court.

Joel Osei, 21, from Chingford, was arrested earlier this year when police seized drugs with a street value of more than £2,000.

Appearing at Maidstone Crown Court, Osei pleaded guilty to counts of supplying class A drugs and possessing crack cocaine and heroin with intent to supply. He was sentenced to two years and six months detention in a young offenders' institution.

Dave Pate, chief inspector for Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling, said: "We have successfully dismantled a supply chain being led by Osei. The purpose of the chain was to sell heroin and crack cocaine to some of the most vulnerable people in our society, drugs which cause significant harm as well as the associated criminality and antisocial behaviour which can blight our local communities."

Oyster festival to be 'heavily scaled back'

THE Whitstable Oyster Festival is going to be "heavily scaled back" next year following dozens of complaints.

The annual summer event has snowballed in recent years, with an estimated 80,000 people turning up in 2016. However, Canterbury City Council received some 43 complaints about drunk and anti-social behaviour and excessive littering, leading some residents to admit they felt "unsafe".

A report issued to councillors this week, outlined the economic benefits, however, it warned "the increase in visitor numbers, combined with the small footprint of the town has brought significant infrastructure issues" and that "the strong commercial approach which has enabled the festival to grow has subsequently resulted in a perception locally that the festival is no longer a community event".

Therefore, councillors approved an option to re-tender a single year contract for a heavily reduced event for both the Whitstable Oyster Festival and the Herne Bay Festival.

Poppy train service to mark the Somme

A SPECIAL train decorated in poppies will make a very special trip next month to mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

The Southeastern high-speed service in a special design wrap will take paying passengers on a round trip from London, through Kent and on to Brighton to raise money for the Royal British Legion.

It will run on November 12, just ahead of Remembrance Sunday. It is the third year Southeastern has teamed up with UK Rail Tours to run a special high speed service.

It has been organised by Andy Harding, high speed fleet engineering manager at Southeastern and the rail franchise's driver manager, Kent Evenden.

Mr Harding said: "In 2015 we managed to raise more than £20,500 but this year we're hoping to donate even more – all in aid of the Royal British Legion's poppy appeal. We're going to have a special design wrap on the train to commemorate the Battle of the Somme."

Tickets for the one-off service are available via www.ukrailtours.com.

'Evil' Tobin killed others, says detective leading investigation

By Katrine Bussey
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SERIAL killer Peter Tobin "definitely" left other victims, according to the police officer who led investigations into the "evil, sadistic" murderer.

Two of his victims were found buried in the garden of a house in Margate.

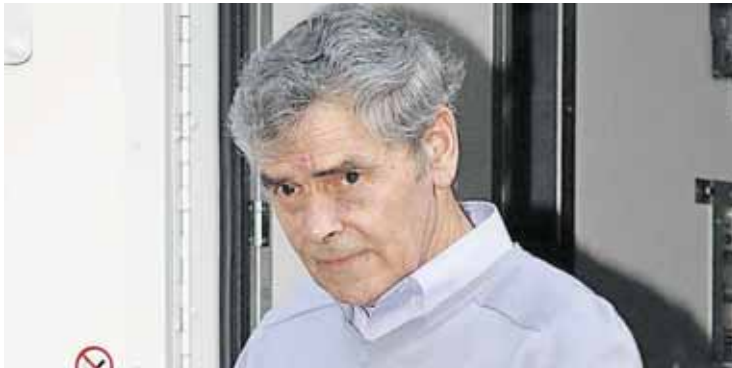
A decade after the rape and murder of Polish student Angelika Kluk, former detective superintendent David Swindle made a fresh appeal for the killer to confess his crimes.

Mr Swindle led Operation Anagram, which was set up by the police after Tobin was convicted of 23-year-old Ms Kluk's murder in 2007.

Tobin is currently serving life sentences in prison for the murders of Ms Kluk, Scottish schoolgirl Vicky Hamilton, 15, and Dinah McNicol from Tillingham, Essex.

Mr Swindle said: "There are definitely other people Tobin has killed and only he knows who they are. He was a sadistic killer who was determined to take lives and conceal them for his pleasure. Ten years on from the murder of Angelika Kluk, it's a poignant time for the families."

The former Strathclyde Police officer added: "You should never give up, that was my attitude. I still think of Tobin



SADISTIC: Peter Tobin, pictured, buried remains of his victims at his home in Margate

a lot, particularly at this time of year.

"You should never forget the victims and you should never forget the evil killers who hold the key to the victims.

"I live in hope that some day we will get the truth about what Tobin has done."

Tobin – who pretended to be a church handyman and used a false name – left Ms Kluk with severe head injuries and multiple knife wounds after subjecting her to a sexually-motivated attack in September 2006.

Police found the young woman's body be-

neath the St Patrick's Roman Catholic church in the Anderston area of Glasgow.

Her body had been dumped through a hatch in the chapel floorboards next to the confessional box, with her hands bound and her mouth gagged.

Police set up Operation Anagram in the wake of the murder and followed a trail of clues to the garden in Irvine Drive, Margate, where they unearthed the remains of both Ms Hamilton and her fellow missing teenager Ms McNicol.

Bye-bye Bake Off as Rav fails to blossom

ERITH contestant Rav Bansal crashed out of the Great British Bake Off on Wednesday night.

He struggled during botanical week in the hugely popular show and was booted off.

Speaking after his exit, the university support worker said: "I was so proud to get past the half way mark, my biggest fear was getting kick out first, and I did feel like a cat that was running out of its lives."

Momentum grows for vice chair to quit

BROADSTAIRS-based vice chairman of the pro-Jeremy Corbyn Momentum organisation, Jackie Walker, has been urged to resign amid allegations she made anti-Semitic comments during a fringe meeting during the Labour conference in Liverpool.

Momentum Thanet denies she made such comments and says the claims are designed to smear her.

'£10k a day' shortfall

GRAVESHAM council says it has to find £10,000 per working day to bridge the funding gap when government support grants end in April 2019.

Its cabinet will discuss the dilemma when it meets on October 10 when it will examine the outcome of the first two parts of a 32-month full service review, which proposes changes to frontline services.

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Future of former cinema site goes to public consultation

PLANS for the future of the site of the former ABC Cinema in Tunbridge Wells are to be presented to the public in a series of consultations this week.

Altitude Real Estate, which purchased the land from former developer the Carlyle Group in April, says it is drafting up a host of ideas for the prime spot and wants to gauge public opinion.

The cinema closed in 2001 and the site remained abandoned for years before it was finally demolished last year.

However, plans as to what to do with the site have stalled with previous developers unable to get ambitious plans for supermarkets or hotels off the ground.

Now, however Altitude is pushing ahead with proposals.



Taking place on Thursday, October 6, and Friday, October 7, the two-day drop-in event in the Camden Centre will outline potential plans for the site and gather the views of local people.

Stephen Tillman, director of Altitude, said: "All views will be fully considered as we continue preparing our proposals for submission of a planning application towards the end of the year."

M20 junction 10a: Time running out to respond

YOUR chance to have a say on a £70 million new junction for the M20 motorway during its latest consultation phase ends this week.

The proposal is for a junction 10a at Ashford – just 700m east of the existing junction 10.

Junction 10a is designed to help relieve the strain on the current junction and serve the major new developments being created around the town.

It will use two bridges and connect to the existing A20 and a new dual carriageway link road built to the A2070 near Sevington.

Now the plans have gone out to consultation following the acceptance of the application for a development consent order by the planning inspectorate.

The planning inspectorate is

the government office which deals with all major infrastructure planning applications.

The estimated £70m cost of the project is being met by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and Highways England, with the remaining contributions to be funded by developers in due course.

Damian Green, Conservative MP for Ashford, added: "The benefits of this will be to improve local infrastructure, ease the pressure on the existing junction 10 and unlock the opportunities for future job creation."

Details can be found on the planning inspectorate website. However, don't delay – all representations must be received by October 3, no later than 11.59pm.

Hotel hosts CCG AGM

THE NHS West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) will hold its annual meeting on October 12 at the Mercure Maidstone Hotel from 2pm to 3pm.

Open to the public, GPs from across Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone, Tonbridge and Sevenoaks will attend.

Fermor runs for seat

EMILY Fermor has been confirmed as the Liberal Democrat candidate for the next general election for the Maidstone and the Weald constituency.

She replaces Jasper Gerard who stood in 2015. She was elected to Maidstone Borough Council earlier this year.

Burglars target schools

SIX schools in Canterbury were hit by burglars on the same night on Wednesday, prompting police to urge people to be extra vigilant.

The break-ins took place in Pilgrims Way, Knight Avenue, St Stephen's Hill, Milner Court, Blean and Cambridge Road.

£5m law clinic to open

DEPUTY president of the UK Supreme Court, Baroness Hale of Richmond, will open the new £5 million law clinic at the University of Kent on Thursday.

The clinic will offer free legal advice to the local community for those who could not otherwise afford it.



Bridge Haven Care Home

'The staff are very caring and there is always a friendly atmosphere at Bridge Haven.'

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Top Three Stories



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Variable limit in force when TAP in place

2. Flood warning issued

Heavy rain expected to hit county

3. Preacher seeks appeal

Anjem Choudary was jailed last month

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FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: Artists' impressions of the Ebbsfleet Garden City have been released this week. See page 5 for the full story.

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Top Three Blogs



1. Time for a 6-hour day?

It works in Sweden, so should we try it here?

2. Straight outta uni

A young man's first step in the adult world

3. It's time to go, Jeremy

Why the leader is holding Labour back

Results of the KoS Online Poll

Will you attend the 2017 Whitstable Oyster Fest?

- 1 Always have, always will - 0%
- 2 I have done but not next year - 33%
- 3 Never have but I will next year - 17%
- 4 Never have, never will - 50%

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Family of Roy Blackman watch killer sentenced to life in prison

A vicious attack on a 73-year-old man and the theft of his valuables left a quiet community in shock. Now, after a major investigation, Mark Love has been told he's going to jail for a minimum of 28 years

A 38-year-old from Staplehurst is spending his first weekend behind bars after being handed a life term for the brutal murder of Roy Blackman – while the hunt to bring the rest of his gang to justice is stepped up.

Mr Blackman, 73, was found lying on the floor of his bungalow in Biddenden on March 21 by a member of his family, lifeless, and with severe facial injuries. His home had been completely ransacked.

Police believe he had been defending his property after disturbing a gang of burglars who made off with firearms, jewellery and a large amount of cash stashed in a safe.

The crime stunned the county and left the village shaken.

And on Thursday, Mark Love was found guilty in front of Maidstone Crown Court and told he will spend 28 years behind bars before being considered for parole.

He was found guilty of the murder of Mr Blackman and aggravated burglary of a house in Northiam, East Sussex, which saw a couple assaulted and guns and money stolen in February.

Detective Inspector Lee Whitehead explained: "In relation to the murder it is my belief the offenders went to this house with the intention of carrying out another burglary, but were confronted by Mr Blackman who was attempting to protect his property.

"Rather than taking the opportunity to leave, they attacked the vulnerable 73 year-old, eventually beating him to death.

"Once dead, the offenders made efforts to destroy forensic evidence that may have tied them to their crime. They cut the clothing from Mr Blackman's body and placed it into water and also used cleaning products to wash blood from the walls. Despite their actions we were able to secure forensic evidence from a number of areas.

"This was a cowardly and completely unnecessary attack. Although Mark Love's conviction and imprisonment will protect the public it will not bring Mr Blackman back. My thoughts and best wishes go to Mr Blackman's family, who have supported our investigation and acted with great dignity throughout the trial process.

"In relation to the attack in Northiam, I hope this conviction will go some way in allowing the victims to move on with their lives after such a traumatic incident. They also have my thanks for their support and patience throughout this inquiry.

"Mark Love was not alone in committing these offences and I would like to reassure members of the public that our investigation will continue to identify those who are yet to face justice."

Love was charged with the murder of Roy Blackman after DNA obtained while he was in custody was found to match a profile that was found on a bathroom tap in Mr Blackman's home and in a work glove found at the scene.

A statement from the family of Mr Blackman said: "We, Roy's family, have attended the court case throughout and have heard all of the evidence put before the jury. The horror of what Mark Love and others did to our dad that night, together with the 'ransacking' of his house, will haunt us forever and is truly unforgivable.

"Justice has been served but it will not bring him back, we have lost our dad, our role model and our children have lost their beloved grandad. His murder has also deeply affected his friends and the wider community.

"Our dad was an honest and hard-working man and the world is a poorer place for his passing. We thank everyone who has been involved in the case, the police, the CPS and the prosecution team; they have worked tirelessly to bring Mark Love to justice. His prison sentence will protect other families from the pain and loss that we have suffered."

Police investigating the crime identified Love as a suspect in both cases.

In Northiam on February 21, a group of four men smashed their way into a couple's home, assaulted them despite the victims being compliant, and stole a large amount of cash, a Toyota Hilux and firearms. A dark-coloured Mini Cooper had been seen by passers-by to be parked near to the address.

DNA was recovered from a club hammer and taser that were left behind and was matched to Love. The Hilux was later seized by officers on March 7 after being reported abandoned in Biddenden.

Detectives received information that later in the day of Mr Blackman's murder, two men were seen at the Ashford Designer Outlet spending hundreds of pounds and acting in a manner that made staff believe they were drunk.

One of these men was Love.

Having bought some new clothes, Love changed into an entirely new outfit, including new socks, and asked the cashier at the shop to dispose of his old clothes, but she refused.

Police were called because staff suspected one of the men to be drink-driving. Officers stopped Love in his van in nearby Beaver Lane where in just five minutes he had spent £140 in a betting shop, but found no evidence of drink-driving.

At this stage, the officers were unaware that he was in the process of being linked to a murder.

On the afternoon of March 25, a family on a walk in Cranbrook dis-



KILLER: Mark Love



VICTIM: Roy Blackman

covered two firearms, some jewellery and a registration plate belonging to a dark-coloured Mini Cooper in a stream in Dig Dog Lane.

Also found were a pair of keys with a keyring from Roy Blackman Motors.

On March 31, a dark-coloured Mini Cooper was seized, that was on cloned registration plates.

Love was arrested on April 7 after voluntarily attending Folkestone police station when he became aware officers were looking for him.

He was also arrested on suspicion of the aggravated burglary in Northiam after Kent Police took on the in-

North & West



SCENE: Wreckage after raid on Roy Blackman's Biddenden bungalow

vestigation due to the links with Mr Blackman's death.

Love owned a lock-up at a farm called Pork Pie Farm in Frittenden, and that was searched following his arrest.

In the lock-up was Love's van, which was dripping wet and had pools of dirty water in it, consistent with being drenched in water in a possible effort to remove forensic evidence.

Love was charged with the murder of Roy Blackman after DNA obtained while he was in custody was found to match a profile that was found on a bathroom tap in Mr Blackman's

home and in a work glove found at the scene. He was also charged with the aggravated burglary in Sussex.

George Digweed, who, along with his wife Kate, was the victim of Love's burglary in Sussex, said: "Kate and I have been through a horrific ordeal which has changed our lives forever. We are slowly rebuilding our confidence in trusting people and our surroundings.

"We have the opportunity of rebuilding our lives, a privilege that cannot unfortunately be afforded to Roy Blackman, whose family has shown immense courage throughout this whole ordeal."

Alarm as ambulance service is plunged into special measures

The South East Coast Ambulance Service has been slammed by the Care Quality Commission for the way it responds and handles its services. **Tom Pyman** reports on the latest worrying findings

THE troubled ambulance trust which serves patients in Kent is at risk of being placed in special measures, a damning report has warned.

A turbulent year for the South East Coast Ambulance Service (Secamb) appears to have peaked following the latest inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), in which it found the service inadequate for providing services that are safe and well-led and requiring improvement for being effective and responsive to people's needs.

A warning notice was issued to the trust, identifying several areas of concern.

The health body found systems in place to ensure enough staff are deployed appropriately were not effective and the trust was not meeting national performance targets for response times.

Low staffing levels were having an impact on both performance and fatigue of staff, and the trust did not have access to information to review the mix of staff or safe staffing levels, it found.

The report also found NHS 111 calls were not always responded to in a timely and effective manner and while the trust recognised that their performance in meeting the expected standards was not good enough, they had only identified limited actions to improve their performance, stemming from a lack of strategic leadership.

Processes to ensure that equipment is properly maintained and secured were not adequate and safeguarding arrangements within the trust were weak, resulting in a lack of accountability, and investigation which in turn meant that the trust leadership had a poor understanding of safeguarding issues.

It also found the systems in place were not operated safely and effectively and that the trust had allowed staff to develop practice outside national guidelines which put patients at risk, and that governance arrangements were also not operated effectively.

It is the latest blow for the trust in recent months, following a scandal of delaying sending help for certain calls to allow extra time for patient assessments and revelations of computer system failures during emergency callouts.



SECAMB: A lack of strategic leadership was cited as one of the key concerns of our ambulance service

Chairman Tony Thorne resigned in March before chief executive Paul Sutton also left the trust two months later.

One positive conclusion from the inspection was that the trust was rated 'Good' for delivering services that are caring

Professor Sir Mike Richards, chief inspector of hospitals, said following the publication of the report on Thursday: "South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust has been through a period of significant upheaval following changes in its senior leadership.

"It is to the credit of the staff that they have continued to provide a vital service to the people of Kent, Surrey and Sussex – dealing with almost a million emergency calls a year alone.

"Throughout our inspection we heard how staff were giving their best, treating patients kindly, with dignity, care and compassion.

"It was apparent that the leadership had not been supporting staff to do their jobs effectively.

"Staff told us there was a culture of harassment and bullying.

"We found in many cases there weren't enough properly trained staff, or that the proper equipment wasn't available to them.

"At the time of the inspection, we found evidence that senior executives were not always pulling in the same direction.

"However, improvements are being formulated by an experienced interim chair and the executive has been recently strengthened by new appointments.

"While we have significant concerns about the performance of the ambulance service, I want to provide some reassurance.

"Once care arrives, it is of a good standard – with dedicated and caring call handlers, ambulance crew, paramedics and other frontline staff working hard to ensure this.

"Secondly, the trust are taking urgent steps needed and some improvements have already been made – to ensure that everyone who relies on this service receives excellent, timely care.

"I am recommending that Secamb be placed into special measures to ensure the service

gets the support it needs to improve.

"I hope that support from external partners including the NHS Improvement and NHS England will give the trust a clearer sense of direction and support the introduction of the improvements which are so clearly needed."

Last month, Secamb was forced to deny claims it was to merge with another trust as it announced an agreement of "formal collaborative working".

A deal was struck with the neighbouring South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS), which operates in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire and Oxfordshire, to ensure more expertise and best practice will be shared.

Both Secamb and SCAS say they will explore further opportunities to work together to reduce costs, accelerate improvements and maintain high quality services for patients.

Agreed by mutual consent by both organisations' boards, full accountability for all decisions will remain with the two separate unitary statutory boards.

Bosses were clear that the

collaboration is not the start of a merger between the trusts, however it is understood such a move may not be off the table altogether in future.

Speaking in response to this week's report, the trust said it welcomes the additional support placement into special measures would offer.

Acting chief executive Geraint Davies said: "While we are pleased that the dedication and care of our staff is highlighted as good in this report, we are sorry that we have not met the standards expected in a number of other areas.

"Following initial feedback from the CQC we have already been working on and implementing a number of improvements.

"I would like to reassure everyone we serve that I, along with my senior team, am committed and focused on ensuring these necessary changes continue.

"We are determined to implement the changes required to restore confidence in our service."

"I would also like to take this opportunity to point to the enormous amount of excellent work undertaken every day by our staff across our region, often in challenging circumstances, to respond to and treat patients, be it responding to a major road collision or saving the life of a patient in cardiac arrest.

"I fully recognise that this is a challenging time for the trust and accept that these are serious concerns which we must address.

"We understand the seriousness of placement into special measures but would value the additional support that this would offer us.

"We expect that the move will mean the work we have already started can continue at pace."

Steve Inett from Healthwatch Kent, an independent organisation set up to champion the views of patients and social care users across the county, said: "Naturally we are extremely disappointed to hear today's announcement.

"Our ambulance trust has hit the headlines on several occasions in recent months and not for positive reasons.

"It is now imperative that the trust works with patients and local Healthwatch to make immediate improvements and that the public are reassured."



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Chorus demand answers to how academy ran up such debts

A government investigation into the collapse of an academy trust running five primary schools across the county has been launched, while education chiefs question why it took so long to assess its glaringly obvious financial struggles...

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A SCANDAL that resulted in the collapse of an academy trust running a number of primary schools across Kent has been branded "outrageous" in the county council chamber.

Lilac Sky Schools Academy Trust (LSSAT) announced back in July it was working with the Department for Education (DfE) to transfer its nine schools - five of which are in Kent, namely Richmond, Morehall, Knockhall, Martello Grove and Thistle Hill Academies in Folkestone, Sheppey and Greenhithe.

Martello Grove and Morehall have since been absorbed by a freshly-launched trust, Turner Schools, after the LSSAT warned its closure was "an essential strategic move for the future... to serve the needs of our children".

However, it has emerged that payments from the trust to firms run by founder, Trevor Averre-Beeson for services provided have totalled more than £1m over the past two years.

Consequently, the financial accounts for the year ending August 2015 reveal LSSAT ended the year some £665,972 in debt and with a pension deficit of £1.32m, bringing the overall shortfall to almost £2m.

The DfE's Education Funding Agency (EFA) and a regional schools commissioner then intervened to prevent the trust from buying more consultancy services from its founders, before Mr Averre-Beeson later stepped down as a trustee.

Its accounts read: "The trust has taken a number of steps to ensure that the deficit is recovered during 2015-16.

"These include increasing the top slice [money contributed from individual academies to central funding] from the nine academies to seven per cent; charging academies for central services such as HR and payroll; cost cutting through reducing the number of staff employed in the central office and reducing significantly the spending on senior trust staff; and achieving economies of scale for central services."

However, this didn't prove to be enough as the trust was ultimately closed, before its demise was then discussed at Kent County Council's education and young people's services cabinet committee last week.

Swale council leader and Labour councillor on KCC, Roger Truelove, invited the county's

education chief, Patrick Leeson, to provide public confirmation of the details of the collapse.

"The initial impression given was that the withdrawal was a voluntary decision on behalf of the trust," Cllr Truelove told the chamber.

"But I have a suspicion that the regional administrator was not satisfied with the management of these schools by this trust and it may involve financial issues.

"I hope you're not going to say this is confidential because this is public sector schools funded by the public sector and the public have a right to know about the circumstances that leads to the trust being removed from running schools in Kent and Sussex."

Mr Leeson confirmed the financial row, and said in response: "It has failed, that's public knowledge, thankfully there was swift action on the part of the regional schools commissioner and national schools commissioner, and those schools have been taken away from Lilac Sky and passed to other sponsors.

"Clearly this is very disruptive for the schools concerned, very regrettable that this has happened.

"I have to say that Lilac Sky took a percentage of those schools' budgets which was not



SCANDAL: Peter Read foresaw the crisis

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OUTRAGE: Patrick Leeson has bemoaned the collapse of Lilac Sky Schools Academy Trust, which ran schools like Richmond Academy (inset)

tenable and those schools are now facing financial difficulty as a result and I think that's outrageous.

"The schools have now been passed to other sponsors and we are quickly beginning to work with those sponsors in order to affect the transition of those schools to new arrangements.

"It is our job, clearly, to facilitate support and work with that as much as possible to ensure there is a smooth transition for those schools to new governance arrangements, new manage-

ment arrangements, and to make sure the teaching staff and pupils that attend those schools experience as little disruption as possible.

"It has been a very unfortunate experience, it is extremely disappointing especially given the fact that two of our new primary schools in Kent were being managed by Lilac Sky.

"Let's hope, let's trust that nationally enough systems and procedures are being put into place to make sure that other academy chains do not similarly fail because this is incredibly disrup-

tive for the schools concerned."

The management of the trust's finances attracted widespread criticism, and a letter sent out to parents of pupils at the Knockhall Academy in Greenhithe earlier this year revealed an investigation by the EFA was under way.

A spokesperson for the government department told KoS this week: "We are in discussion with the Lilac Sky Schools Academy Trust regarding their financial and governance processes.

"We cannot comment further while these discussions are ongoing.

"Academies are subject to much stricter oversight and accountability than council-run schools.

"One of the strengths of the academy system is that where issues of any kind are identified we can take swift action."

However, education consultant Peter Read, who runs the kentadvice.co.uk website, felt the government failed to take action against "one of the very worst academy chains operating in Kent" quickly enough, as problems appeared clear as early as April 2015 and slammed a KCC U-turn.

The former Gravesend head teacher told KoS: "I am lost for words – just over 12 months ago Patrick Leeson was telling the council what a wonderful organisation LSSAT was.

"The government failed miserably to take action when this was flagged up because there were clear signs LSSAT was mismanaging its schools, like the shambles of the Furness School [a now-closed special school in Hextable], where together with KCC, it presided over a totally unacceptable deficit of £1.63m.

"The government needs to monitor academy chains more closely to stop this abuse of children's schools and education that is happening.

"I'm afraid to say it also raises questions over the capability of KCC to monitor what's going on, as exemplified by Furness.

"This is a company that submitted accounts which have since been discredited by the trustees, and like many other commercial academy chains it runs separate companies which extract considerable money out of school budgets to boost the profits of those companies.

"This is a national scandal and at a time when there is a shortage of money going to education, it has to be stopped.

"What ought to happen is the EFA rule that LSSAT should have no further dealings with state schools, which may be why it's looking to move into the private education sector."

LSSAT failed to respond to our enquiries.

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Cathedral stone sells for £210,000

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

AN auction of stone originally used in one of Canterbury Cathedral's most imposing windows has raised £210,000 for future conservation of the World Heritage Site.

A £2.5m project to completely rebuild the Great South Window began back in 2009 after a chunk of rock fell from the frame, prompting the area to be completely wrapped in scaffolding to protect it and a major seven-year project to replace the frame and protect the valuable stained glass it displayed.

Scaffolding on the exterior of the building has now been completely removed and an official unveiling will take place this Saturday, October 1.

But to raise funds for the ongoing conservation work at the cathedral, chunks of the stone removed and replaced went under the auctioneer's hammer.

More than 200 people crowded into the cathedral's stone mason yard eager to take home an historic piece and they were joined by those bidding online from the USA, India and the rest of the UK.

The sale was organised by the Canterbury Cathedral Trust. Its chief executive, Andrew Edwards, said: "This was a truly unique event, attracting interest from around the world and providing that special opportunity to take home a piece of Canterbury Cathedral. A big thank you to all our bidders, our auctioneers the Canterbury Auction Galleries and all the local businesses who helped make this day one to remember."

All of the 144 lots of stone were sold during the afternoon with some of the winning bids drawing gasps and applause.

The highest prices paid were at the end of the auction when two pieces of 1428 Caen stone known as principal springers fetched £7,400 each.

But even the smaller stones at-

tracted wide interest with some lots suggested as ideal book ends consistently reaching more than £500.

The Canterbury Auction Galleries waived their usual charges so that all the money raised could be used for future work to ensure the Cathedral's legacy.

Work to first construct the showpiece window began in 1428 and some of the stones being auctioned dated back to that period in the cathedral's life. Others told of the window's history as they featured the repairs and conservation carried out by previous generations of crafts people.

The new limestone, which has been carved by the cathedral's stonemasons, to exactly match the previous stones, can now be seen and the stained glass, including the internationally-renowned medieval Ancestors of Christ, is being returned to its home.

The cost of replacing the window has been met by generous benefactors.

HAMMER:
Stone from the cathedral window was sold at auction



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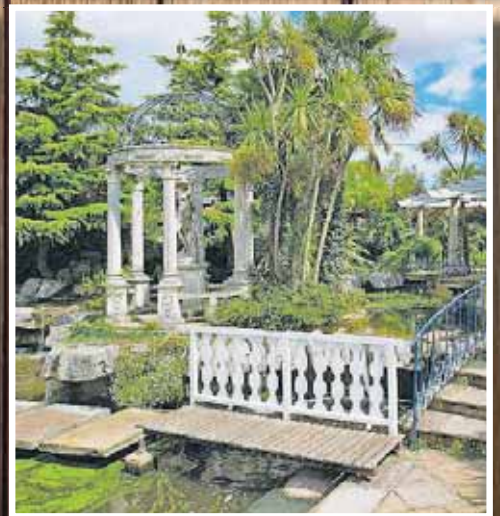
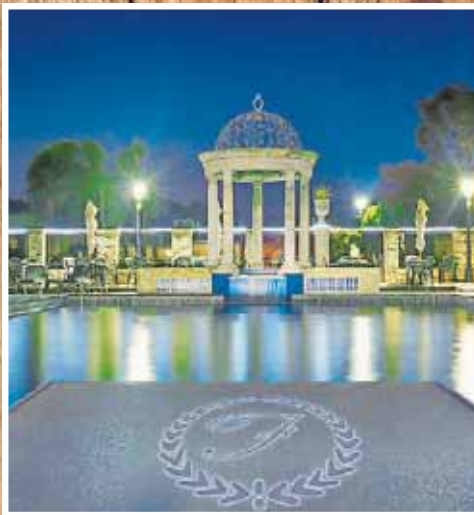
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Duo all set for gruelling Atlantic row challenge

Inspired by the death of a friend, two friends with no experience are training to tackle 40ft waves across the ocean...

By Adele Couchman

adele.couchman@archant.co.uk

TWO childhood friends will be embarking on a 3,000 nautical mile trans-Atlantic row that will see them battling 40-foot waves, searing equatorial heat and extreme fatigue as they travel across the world's second largest ocean.

Max Thorpe and Chris Williams, both 23 and from Tunbridge Wells, will spend up to 90 days rowing between the Canary Islands and Antigua as part of the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge – dubbed the world's toughest row.

The former Judd School boys are the youngest crew of the 14 boats taking part, and will be racing as team Tide Together on December 14 to raise money for the charity Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY) following the sudden death of Mr William's friend during his second year of university.

The pair, who have been best

friends since starting the Tonbridge secondary school, will first need to raise £60,000 sponsorship to get them to the start line.

Despite more people having been to space or climbed Everest than have rowed the Atlantic, the 23-year-olds confess to being complete novices to the sport.

"We've never rowed before we got in our boat about two months ago. We're starting completely from scratch, but I'm confident in our ability to pick up something quickly", explains Mr Thorpe, who now lives in Groombridge, having just graduated with a degree in politics from Nottingham University.

"I've always wanted to do something to push myself right to the limit, testing my mental and physical capacity. I only asked Chris about the challenge three or four months ago, but I knew he would say yes almost immediately."

The duo have since been working out everyday at the gym and are using Bewl Water in Lamberhurst, as their training base. But with past



FRIENDS: Max Thorpe and Chris Williams met in school and are preparing for their toughest test yet

rowers reporting blisters, salt rash, sharks and even extreme hallucinations, Mr Thorpe explains that all the preparation in the world cannot fully equip the pair for the mammoth challenge that lies ahead.

"Physically, it will be difficult to prepare ourselves for rowing 24 hours a day and adapting to different sleeping patterns," he told KoS. "Being bashed around the ocean, we'll face mechanical issues – meaning we'll be responsible for fixing anything that goes wrong on the journey."

"Seeing our first storm will be a scary moment seeing as we're not exactly seasoned ocean sailors – there's not really a way you can prepare for that."

"But as well as the challenges, we'll see some incredible wildlife, sunsets and starry skies, and also learn a lot about ourselves as well. It still feels surreal that this will be our lives."

After spending much of their school years playing cricket for Tunbridge Wells, the duo are passionate about sport and wish to raise awareness of cardiac health issues among young people like themselves who wish to exert themselves leading productive, healthy lifestyles.

Out of the £100,000 they aim to raise for the row, the friends say £40,000 of the total will go Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY) – a charity who look to prevent young cardiac death through research and raising awareness. It has been high profile in encouraging youngsters to have quick heart checks in order to detect any possible problems.

"In my second year at university, a North & West

good friend of mine, a fit and healthy young man, died suddenly from an undetected heart condition," explains Mr Williams, who has been coaching and playing cricket in Australia for the past two winters after graduating from Leeds University.

"Tragedies of this kind happen on average 14 times a week in the UK, and CRY is focused on offering online sign ups for local cardiac checks to detect heart conditions in young people."

Mr Thorpe adds: "Young people often operate on a strange sense of invincibility. Chris and I have both felt this, but it's important to realise this can happen to anyone however healthy or fit they might be or might feel."

"With prominent sportsmen like Fabrice Muamba nearly passing away on the pitch [the Bolton player collapsed after a heart attack during a Premier League clash with Spurs], I've certainly got more health conscious as I've got older. It can happen to anyone at anytime – even people I look up to."

From the £60,000 costs of the trip, £35,000 will go on the pairs' boat – something they will be re-selling after the Tide Together challenge and donating the proceeds to CRY.

The charity's push for more local cardiac checks include electrocardiograms and echocardiograms – fast and efficient ways of detecting heart conditions in young people.

As well as raising much needed funds, Mr Thorpe and Mr Williams hope the 3,000 nautical mile challenge will be a coming-of-age trip

that will give them much needed thinking space about their aspirations in life.

"Being out on the boat for 90 days means we'll learn a lot about ourselves. At the moment we're in a bit of a limbo period after finishing uni, so hopefully the trip will give us some sort of direction for the future", says Mr Thorpe.

"We have left all of our options open and hopefully the row will open a few doors for us."

And there is also the challenge of the pair spending up to 90 days together in cramped conditions.

"We have been best friends since we were 10 years old," said Mr Thorpe.

"But it's a funny feeling spending that much time with someone on a boat you can't even stand up on."

He added: "We know that we need to avoid issues that could cause arguments, such as being late on the oars at the start of our shifts, but we back ourselves not to fall out with each other."

To help reach their £100,000 target, the pair are looking for support from individuals through to corporate sponsors – the latter being able to chose from a number of packages which will include branding on their 7.4 metre long boat.

■ For more details of sponsorship packages, how to donate and about the crew themselves, visit www.tidetoggether.co.uk.

The official race site, through which their race progress can be monitored, is www.taliskerwhiskyatlanticchallenge.com.



APPEAL: The pair are now appealing for funds to help swell their mission

kentnews.co.uk kent-life.co.uk

College finally delivers its key piece to regeneration jigsaw

A major education hub in Ashford town centre was proposed more than 10 years ago. Now work is nearing completion on what will become a major county venue

By Emily King

emily.king@archant.co.uk

COLLEGE students across the county have had a rocky ride over recent years.

From the financial decline of South Kent College, to the ill-fated merger to form the colossal K College, and now the struggles of Canterbury College; the setbacks have come thick and fast over the last decade.

Underpinned by a steady decline in funding and a more ferocious marketplace for prospective sixth formers, only the fittest can survive.

For Ashford, the town has inadvertently found itself at the heart of the problems.

A little over ten years ago, South Kent College unveiled ambitious plans to move from its long time home in Jemmett Road, south of the retail centre, to set up a state-of-the-art new campus in the very heart of the historic market town.

The scheme was not just significant

for the college, but also the town itself, looking to push forward and develop its centre so throttled by its once restrictive ring road.

Its masterplan was to see an education centre on one side of the road, an innovative shared space traffic scheme (which blurs the road and path to give all equal priority and make it more pedestrian friendly), the end of the one-way system, and development on the land on the opposite side of the road for restaurants and a cinema once laid waste by the development of High Speed One.

But then the economy nosedived into recession. The college, which had agreed a deal with a patient housebuilder to sell its Jemmett Road grounds, found itself struggling financially, and all bets were off. Ashford Borough Council, which had been driving forward the plans, was left wondering just how unfortunate its timing could have been.

The college plans were scrapped and ultimately South Kent College was consumed by West Kent College in 2010. Then merged giant K College mismanaged its way into a financial

“ It will give students the finest, most modern, best equipped facilities. It means each and every one of them will be encouraged to achieve their optimum potential ”

Mark Lumsdon-Taylor,
Hadlow College

quagmire too and that collapsed.

Battered and bruised, the Jemmett Road college was then snapped up by the Hadlow Group in 2014. Finally, it seems, it is in safe hands.

Hadlow has demonstrated over the years an ability to think ahead, invest well and grow an enviable reputation, built on its most classic of Kentish roots of horticulture and land management at its Hadlow College site near Tonbridge.

And now it is on the verge of finally delivering the Ashford dream. Renaming the college Ashford College, it has pulled down buildings the college owned on Elwick Road, on the corner of the town's ring road and a stone's throw from the international station and in its place, growing at a remarkable pace, is its £26 million replacement.

An imposing building which will be glass fronted and curve gracefully around the bend of the road, it is exactly the sort of modern development the town needs.

What's more, it is on time and on budget according to the site's contractors and will be ready for a new intake of students in September 2017 – as well as absorbing all those currently at Jemmett Road.

A topping out ceremony held recently, allowed a glimpse behind the scenes of a building which is destined to become a landmark on the town's skyline.

A spokesman for the college told KoS: “The Jemmett Road site has been sold, though the price of the sale is confidential, and the Hadlow Group

and Ashford Borough Council are working together to realise the site's potential. It will be used for development.”

And that's almost certain to be housing.

So what will Hadlow bring to safeguard the future of a college that



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HIGH: College build should be complete by February next year, and ready to welcome all students from its old site in south Ashford in time for the start of the next academic year in September 2017. Inset, how it looks from the street

has been left in limbo for a decade?
A Hadlow Group spokesperson explained: "Hadlow College received an outstanding from Ofsted in 2010, and this is something we believe Ashford

College could achieve in the future under our guidance."
And vocational courses are going to be high up the list of priorities being offered in this changing world.

Mark Lumsdon-Taylor, director of finance and resources and deputy chief executive of the Hadlow Group, explained: "This new campus will give students the finest, most mod-

ern, best equipped facilities. Combined with outstanding tutors and a caring environment, each and every one of them will be encouraged to achieve their optimum potential."

Once open, it will be able to offer apprenticeship opportunities across 20 industries, and facilities on campus include a fine dining restaurant and a hair and beauty salon.

The heads of the project also boast of purpose-built workshops for engineering, motor vehicle repair and construction trades, as well as real-life working experiences, and state-of-the-art equipment.

Finally, it seems, Ashford College will be able to fight for students from across the county and compete against the likes of the equally forward thinking East Kent College (which now runs the former South Kent College sites in Dover and Folkestone and has come to the rescue of the cash-strapped Canterbury College).

Adds the Hadlow spokesperson: "There are colleges, like Canterbury, that are struggling. We wouldn't like to say we will gain their potential students but we believe it is important for young people to have choices.

"Where young people choose to study will depend on the courses and apprenticeships on offer but businesses and students are looking for success and great opportunities. They are looking to be in the centre of things, and that's what makes Ashford College an attractive site. It's set to revolutionise the town."

And it's that impact on the town which is so significant.

So long marketing itself as the best placed in the county, it knows it needs to deliver on promises to enrich the

lives of those who live there, rather than simply telling them how easy it is to get somewhere else.

The Ashford College project is one of a number of major plans the council hopes will finally see them come good on their promises.

Conservative Gerry Clarkson is leader of Ashford Borough Council. He explains: "This marks a significant milestone in the delivery of one of the council's big eight projects. With over 1,000 students and over 100 staff in this location, within easy walking distance of nearby shops, services, bars and restaurants, this development will also have a positive impact on the high street too. The new college is one of a number of exciting developments which are changing the face of the town centre."

Other projects include the creation of a new multiplex cinema just a few hundred yards up the road, a commercial quarter and leisure facilities. Not to mention the expansion of the town's popular designer outlet centre.

At the topping out ceremony, the town's great and the good could see the progress made and watch the site be blessed by the Reverend John MacKenzie.

All going to plan, BAM Construction South East – the firm behind the project – says it should be fully complete by February, allowing it to then be prepared for the students in September.

For the good of the town and, more importantly, for the good of the borough's youngsters, Ashford College should now be playing the major role in the educational mix it has always aspired to.

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Five years on since the curtain went up

Chris Britcher visits the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury as it reflects on its triumphs and the challenges which lie ahead

FIVE years ago, the staff of the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury were collectively holding their breath. And not without good reason.

The city's showpiece theatre had closed two years before and the entire building demolished. In its place was a modern, glass-fronted sharp edged facility which glowed at night and rivalled the cathedral in height on the city's skyline.

"Build it and they will come" had underpinned the £25.6m investment made – but would they? Theatre, after all, is such a fickle business and one which continues to be mired by perceptions of an appeal only to the middle and upper classes.

"I don't want to sound in any way arrogant," says the theatre's long-time director Mark Everett this week, a man who you cannot help thinking would be hard pushed to sound arrogant, "but I always thought our audience would come back quite quickly. I remember the audiences at the old theatre and how they felt about going to their theatre.

"I worried a bit about the numbers.

Our best ever average attendance was 710 and to justify the costs we had to do better than that.

"I had a niggles about the industry – would they come here with their productions, would it be right for them?

"There was also technical worry, which I didn't share with anyone, that the auditorium wouldn't work. I always thought it would, but theatre places are tricky places. They can look great on paper, but in reality it can be different."

Five years on, and those fears have all been allayed.

Average attendance is now in excess of 900. The main reason to rebuild – to increase capacity to 1,200, big enough to pull in the major production companies and their box office hits – has delivered.

Relationships with the likes of the Royal Shakespeare Company and National Theatre have "exceeded expectations" with that underlined by the celebrated War Horse touring production coming to the Marlowe for a remarkable month-long series of shows next autumn. Half of the tickets have already been sold.

It hasn't all been plain sailing. There were some unexpected issues with a handful of seats on the top level which meant restricted views. All these have now seen prices slashed and customers warned accordingly.

There are also some challenges, out of its control, on the horizon.

As successful as it is, and cherished by both audiences and performers alike, it is a local authority-run facility and as supportive as Canterbury City Council has been, talk of east Kent councils merging into some sort of unitary or 'super district' council have grown from whispers to formal discussions.

Explains Mr Everett who, despite recently turning 65, is a man who after more than 20 years in post clearly has a lot he still wants to deliver for the theatre: "I think a council merger could be tricky for us because we know the debate about local government is reaching some sort of conclusion reasonably soon – probably within the next six to 12 months.

"I'm half blocking that out, I think we'll not need a subsidiary for much



longer from the council, but if it remains inside council management I think that would be quite a challenge.

"Canterbury's attitude to arts and culture has been immensely positive. Whereas the good folk of Thanet may well take a somewhat different view. And what would Dover District Council think? And we don't know about the austerity programme that was in place before Theresa May and what her attitude is towards that programme. Her focus has, understandably been on Brexit, but if she continues to pursue reductions in local

government funding we would be decidedly disadvantaged – and under quite a major threat – if there was an east Kent authority."

Canterbury's position in the county has always been unique – a city where the streets drip history, culture and with a big student population it is always vibrant. And a top theatre is not so much a luxury as, surely, a necessity in such a place.

Leader of Canterbury City Council, Simon Cook, said he was proud of what the theatre had achieved: "It shows how right the council's deci-

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SUCCESS: Marlowe has welcomed 1.81m theatre-goers to its new home

sion was to rebuild the theatre – a brave one at a time when the world was plunging into recession. It was all about making a massive gesture of confidence in the city as a destination to have fun in and where you can enjoy glorious nights out.

“By the end of this financial year, the economic benefit it will have brought to the city will top £150m. Shops, restaurants, bars and local suppliers have all seen the benefit of the thousands of people flocking to

the city to enjoy the theatre’s shows.”

Five years after its big reopening, and the theatre’s team are dedicated to its continued growth – most notably through its community outreach programmes and remarkable fundraising through the Marlowe Theatre Development Trust – its charitable arm which looks to ensure the theatre is appealing to all, and seeking out home-grown artistic and creative talent.

Backed by generous donors who see the wider picture when it comes to in-

STARS SHINE FOR WEEKEND OF BIRTHDAY EVENTS

TO MARK the fifth anniversary of its rebirth, the Marlowe is holding a host of very special events – many of them free – next weekend in and around the theatre.

Taking place on both Saturday and Sunday, it will culminate in a special gala performance on the Sunday which will feature a host of world class theatre companies who have appeared at the venue since its relaunch, as well as some familiar faces.

“It’s our chance to say thank you to our customers for their loyal and amazing support and we hope to see as many of them as possible over the weekend,” says theatre director Mark Everett.

It will include street theatre and live music, plus workshops throughout the weekend. All will have tickets available on the day.

The ticket-only gala performance will include performances from the National Theatre (War Horse), the Royal Shakespeare Company (A Midsummer Night’s Dream), Northern Ballet (Jane Eyre), and Zoo Nation Youth Company.

Also in the line up are the Philharmonia, the Marlowe’s



FAMOUS: Stephen Mulhern, who appeared in a string of Marlowe pantos, will be among the star-studded line-up next weekend

resident orchestra, poet Lemn Sissay, and scenes from West End musicals Chicago and The Bodyguard. Pantomime will be represented by Ben Roddy, who is the evening’s host, plus stars such

as TV and radio host – plus star of this year’s panto – Stephen Mulhern, Mister Maker Phil Gallagher, and Shaun Williamson – best known for roles in EastEnders and Ricky Gervais’ Extras.

vesting in the arts – from education to aspiration – it allows the theatre to become more of a creative hub than simply a place to watch a touring production.

Explains Helena Barber, the theatre’s head of fundraising: “You can define a city or a region by its theatre.

“Our vision is to be one of the best regional theatres in the UK and we have to embark on artistic development rather than just present the work of others. Our investors want us to provide that platform for new talent. Five years on, we’ve started it, but there’s a long way to go.”

There is certainly no sense of com-

placency as we sit and chat over a coffee in its popular restaurant. Instead, as preparations ramp up to next weekend’s fifth birthday celebrations (see box off), this is a theatre which clearly feels its work has only just begun. And that is something, surely, the whole county should be supportive of.

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Remarkable glimpse into battle in Sudan goes under hammer

Medals, letters and photographs which provide a look back in time to a brave soldier who saw some of the world's bloodiest battles, are set to be sold to the highest bidder in Canterbury later this month

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

AFIRSTHAND account and a clutch of historic medals awarded to one brave soldier at one of Britain's bloodiest battles go under the auctioneer's hammer this month – but came within a whisker of being tossed into the bin.

But the fast-thinking of a Whitstable man 10 years ago could now pay off handsomely.

Derek Taylor is a distant relative of Albert Edward Keane, who was at the horrific Battle of Omdurman.

Fought in 1898 in Sudan, it saw Lord Kitchener (best known for being the face of the 'your country needs you' campaign), defeated the army of Abdullah al-Taashi, the successor to the self-proclaimed Mahdi, Muhammad Ahmad.

A British army with the latest guns and weaponry massacred their less-prepared opponents leaving 12,000 enemy soldiers dead and more than 13,000 wounded. The British sustained just 47 dead.

Albert Keane was a soldier under Kitchener and a letter he sent and all his medals were passed down through the family until they were spotted in the early 2000s.

They are now all being sold as a collection at the Canterbury Auction Galleries and could fetch up to £3,000.

Mr Taylor told us: "I just want them to be displayed somewhere. This is an important piece of history and should not be in my attic where they have been for years and years."

Essentially, it is a major record of

what has become known as the last meaningful British cavalry charge in history.

The group of nine medals were awarded to the cavalryman who charged with Kitchener's 21st Lancers.

Private Keane later compiled a chilling account of the encounter and sent it home to his family.

Part of Pte Keane's letter reads: "... we kept advancing when the colonel gave the order troops right wheel to line gallop and then charge and then they opened fire on us. We was going as fast as we could (my hair was standing up straight on my head). Well we kept on until we got about 50 yards off when up they jumped about 3,000 out of a water course it was madness so for us to stop them and we kept straight on. We had to jump the nullah (riverbed) before we could get at them and then we started the slaughter. They was about 20 thick. I got my lance into one and I could not get it out so I had to draw my sword ... the blood was flowing in streams."

It came to Mr Taylor through a complex family chain.

He said: "It was all going to be thrown away and I said 'don't do that, it's dated before the 1900s'.

"Later it was all sent to me, and I put it in the attic to keep it safe."

Mr Taylor, a great nephew of Pte Keane, added: "We took a family scrapbook to one of the sale room's free Friday valuation days, but it had no value.

"We also had Keane's letter and the valuer Dave Parker was very interested.

"I said we had lots more associated bits, and took it all in. He was pretty excited at the find. We were told the



COLLECTION: The medals and letters are set to fetch up to £3,000

letter alone was worth something like £300.

"The medals had been in my loft and now I want to put on display somewhere for everyone to appreciate what happened. We were shocked at the value."

The letter was addressed to his father and sisters and described in harrowing detail what happened during some of the battle.

There are also black and white photographs. One is of Sgt Keane with his wife and four children and

another in his police uniform wearing eight of the medals.

Private, later Sgt Keane, went on to serve during the First World War and in India, where he retired in 1929. It is not known when or where he died.

The auction will include the letter, which is dated October 2, 1898, in addition to a host of medals he received – among them the distinguished conduct medal in 1916, the Queen's Sudan medal, the Queen's South Africa medal for Cape Colony, the 1914-15 star, 1914-1918 war



DECORATED: Albert Keane was a decorated soldier and later military policeman who served with pride

medal, Victory medal, the Edward VII long service and good conduct medal, the Khedive's Sudan medal 1896-1908 and, for his later service with the military mounted police, the George VI Army meritorious service medal.

The lots also includes his silver half hunter pocket watch and chain inscribed 'Presented to AE Keane DCM by India Office colleagues on his retirement March 22nd 1929' and a silver rectangular vesta case.

The collection together is said to be worth between £2,000-3,000. The sale takes place over three days, between October 6-8.

■ For details, visit www.thecanterburyauctiongalleries.com.

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PAST: Albert Keane on duty, left and pictured with his family, right



CROP: Kent produces 60 per cent of the total national crop of apples but was given a challenge this year due to the weather

‘It was like loading a shotgun full of rice and shooting at the trees’

Chris Murphy hears about the challenges faced by the county’s apple growers, now reaping the fruit of their toils, after a long winter and the devastating impact of some hail storms on entire orchards...

AS APPLE growers finally get to celebrate the county’s most famous of all its harvests, many are reflecting on a year where the elements appeared to conspire against them.

From a long mild winter, to a damp spring and a summer that only sprang to life late and then delivered scorching temperatures, it has had an impact on the crop for many. And that’s not to mention those places where entire orchards were wiped out in moments after localised hailstorms.

However, the county remains the nation’s primary source of apples and demand this year is set to be as strong as ever before.

Produced in Kent is an organisation which champions local food and drink.

A spokesman explained to KoS: “It has been a challenging year so say lots of growers.

“The winter that drifted on, never really got cold but then also never really wanted to turn into spring either. The effect of this is that our year is now two weeks behind and this has actually continued to extend.

“The cold spring upset some blossom so some areas have a low pear crop too as they hate cold immediately post blossom.

“There has also been some hail and even a terrible storm around Hadlow that wiped out a few orchards entirely.”

One farmer who suffered enormously was Gordon Derbyshire, just up the road in Five Oak Green.

He told us: “We had a hailstorm and half the farm was damaged.

“The impact of the hailstones is

that they bash the fruit and ruin it.

“Last year, we had a hailstorm, but the stones were large and only occasionally hit an apple and left the surrounding ones intact.

“But this year, it was like loading a shotgun with rice and shooting all the trees. The stones were small but hard and hit just about everything.

“It was a fine hail and it peppered them all.”

He said his expensive insurance policy covered some of his losses and admits more of his crop will be going for juice.

Mr Derbyshire said: “It is now a case of fingers crossed for next year.

“About 20 acres was badly damaged and the same again with some peppering from the hail.

“It was really localised. I can see another farm across the road about 500 yards away from my window and they had almost none. It was the luck of the draw. I have heard of other farmers around here who were also smashed as well.”

As if that hadn’t been quite enough, the change in the weather has brought even more problems.

Produced in Kent explained: “The very hot August and September has also done some damage.

“This has been in terms of small fruit sizes if you don’t have irrigation, plus sun scorch on Bramleys which shows as dark cooked patches. That is a bit of a challenge at present, too, as we ideally need a 10 degree difference between day and night temperatures to make red apples really red.”

But in spite of that, the apple industry in Kent remains optimistic.

Produced in Kent added: “We are



number one as we in Kent grow about 60 per cent of the entire UK crop. And there are some new varieties which we expect to be a bit of a hit with consumers.

“For instance, there are lots of Zari in the shops now, and look out for Opal which is a blush golden, and of course are utterly delicious. Then there are Cameo, Rubens, Smitten, Scrumptious and Kentish Kiss.”

Farmers in the county have been digging deep into bank accounts in order to stay ahead of the game.

Produced in Kent said: “There has been a lot of investment in pre-grading, which is checking all the fruit either before storage so they can better inform their marketing plan and retail partners with exactly what they have to sell, in what size band and when, plus large batch grading to meet the needs of several retail partners at once.

“There are new infra-red graders which allow farmers to check the in-

North & West

sides of apples without chopping them up. This provides almost 100 per cent accuracy in making quality guarantees.

“These are truly new innovations in the county but there are also new picking platforms, so pickers don’t need to walk miles carrying heavy bags of fruit; quad bike mounted laser crop estimation systems; and micro analysis of soil in an orchard to measure exactly the nutrition required.

“In one instance we were told of, this had the effect of an 80 per cent saving in the cost of fertiliser.”

All this is helping to keep the county at the top of the apple growing heap.

They said: “Absolutely we are number one in the country. The greatest innovations are here and East Malling Research, which specialises in horticultural research, still leads the way.

“We have the biggest growers in Kent, and we benefit from being close



to the continent and capital making the geography more than ideal.”

Stephen Munday, the chief executive officer of English Apples and Pears, which is tasked with the development and promotion of the industry in this country, told us: “We did have some localised hail damage to some crops, but in spite of this, the harvest should be around 10 per cent higher than last year.

“This is in part to a better yield from fewer larger growers.

“Nationally, we should see some 150,000 tonnes picked, of which around 60 per cent will be from Kent, and be thanks to the thousands employed at this time of year in the industry.

“It is far too early to say what will happen next year as it is all down to the weather between now and then.”

■ More than 1,000 apple varieties will be on display at the Brogdale National Apple Festival on October 15-16, near Faversham.

Week ending October 2, 2016 **27**

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WENDY, 44yrs, dark haired beauty with blue eyes and a fab figure. WLTW gent any age, give me a call and I promise to call you back, or text/email. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424339

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673

MELANIE, 49yrs, varied interests, attractive, sensual lady seeks gent any age or status, call, see what happens. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424339

JANE young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel: No: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715

CALLING all Gentlemen! I'm Janet a mature solvent stylish lady. I'm waiting for you to call me so we can wine/dine and have some good times ACA. Tel: No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424339

KERRY, 35yrs, married in open relationship, attractive, tall, slim and very presentable. Seeks discreet gent any age for casual pleasurable encounters. Tel: 0906 515 3043 Box 422363

Hi I'm Angie, attractive petite mid 50s lady. I'm a very very active lady, with lots of interests. WLTW chap with GSOH, looks/age unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424339

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399

HELLO Gents, I'm a mature attractive interesting lady, with gorgeous eyes. I'm smart, sophisticated, love theatre and films. Give me a call or text me. Looks unimportant, must be kind. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424331

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3023 Box 421375

WIDOW, 62, short, looking for friendship at present, interested? He's got to phone to find out more! Call Jan. Tel: No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424195

SUSIE, 36yrs, attractive, tall slim blonde seeks fifty shades of grey with discreet gent, must have a fun side looks unimportant. Tel: 0906 515 3039 Box 424045

RETIRE lady, an outgoing person, enjoys life, likes meals out, holidays. WLTW someone to share interests with, and quality time. Text only Mailbox: 555262

Hi Gents, I'm Kelly, a down to earth lady, 35yrs, shapely, blonde, seeking someone with GSOH, looks unimportant, any age. ACA, I promise! Tel: 0906 515 3027 Box 423035

MERRY, widow, dark hair, kind and caring, hoping to meet a kind gent for friendship, possibly more. ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422339

LESLEY, 66, retired beauty therapist, blonde hair, blue eyes, size 14, likes going out, travelling, holidays, arts, looking for a nice guy, 57-67, would be great to get a reply. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424147

DIANNA, petite blonde lady, 38yrs, divorced, no kids, wants to spice up her life with new male friends, 35+, might lead to more who knows but no strings. ACA. Box: 4027026

SINGLE lady, 65, blonde, quiet nature, likes the outdoors, picnics, jiving, WLTW single gentleman for companionship and possible romance. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423411

SUSIE, 42yrs loves life, educated, brunette, own home, works to hard and now wants some fun. If you are a kind gent 30+ then text me for a chat. Box: 4187170

WIDOW, 70s, brown hair and eyes, likes walking, pub lunches, places of interest, good company and lots more, seeking a kind genuine male, a n/s, 70-80. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423359

GENUINE lady, 67, slim, GSOH, caring, honest, active, likes most things in life, days out, countryside, animals, long walks, visiting interesting places, cooking and holidays. WLTW a caring, honest male with GSOH, 67-73, with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423289

PAT, petite blonde lady, GSOH, young looking for her age, seeks genuine gent any age with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422393

KIM, 50, lovely kind, 5ft 6, brown eyes, dark curly hair, curvy figure seeks nice genuine guy for LTR, same age as me. Text only Mailbox: 5512493

RITA, seeks a genuine male for friendship, days out, shes very friendly, genuine and social, give her a call ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422403

BARBARA, is a caring lady who seeks a man to care for, she will do anything to make you happy. Just give her a call today. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422411

GENUINE, GSH, attractive, outgoing professional female, 55. Enjoys keeping fit, socialising and travel. WLTW similar male for relationship. Text only Mailbox: 5453851

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTW similar aged gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421427

JO, mature understanding worldly Essex lady, seeks generous gent for regular fetish fantasy role-play, discretion assured. Text only Mailbox: 5320299

FEMALE, blue eyes, slim and pretty, from South Africa, young fifties, seeking a sincere, retired gentleman, who resides close to the sea. Text only Mailbox: 5456242

SINGLE late 60s female, n/s, GSOH, likes going out and being active, not fun on my own, seeking single male, 66-70, n/s, with GSOH, to share each other's interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421433

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTW similar aged gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421429

ORIENTAL lady, honest, caring, loves walking, WLTW a reliable, sincere man for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 5443434

FEMALE, young 58, 5ft2, size 14, blonde, bubbly, GSOH, warm, loving, kind and caring, loves music, animals, seaside, looking for that special someone. Text only Mailbox: 4715158

GENUINE single female 49, seeking good-natured, intelligent, polite, single male for friendship/relationship. Text only to Mailbox: 4198603

Men Seeking

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HELLO my name is Paul, 43, 5ft9, from Sittingbourne in Kent, looking for someone to have some fun with and see where it goes! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422905

GENTLEMAN, 76yrs old, clean-shaven with a good head of hair and a smart dresser, hoping to meet a lady for friendship/relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423645

DAVE genuine guy, 6ft, black hair, blue eyes, medium build, likes sports, gardening, music, seeks female with GSOH and genuine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 38372

BRIAN, 6ft3, fit, bit grey but genuine and kind, looking for a naughty female, for no strings adult fun, if you're interested please get back to me, ACA. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423483

MALE, 53, 5ft6, single, hardworking, looking for slim/small lady, 40-56, Maidstone, Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423663

OUTGOING male, seeking attractive female, likes sports, music, cinema and nights out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414793

ANDREW, 50, slim to medium build, lives in Ashford/Kent area, WLTW a woman, 40-70, for discreet fun, would be great to hear from you so get back to find out more! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423271

BARRY 47, 6ft, well built, seeks female for wine/dining and fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361787

GARY, 53, caring, likes snooker, bowls, looking for a nice woman to meet and fall in love with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423145

LUCY, 32, blonde, tall and slim, looking for a casual fling, nothing serious. Discretion needed and assured. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420237

SINGLE slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091

SLIM female GSOH, 53, Likes walking, pub lunches, days out, looking for soul mate, smart appearance, similar interests N/S GSOH, easy going. Text only to Mailbox No: 4762600

MARION, early 70s, young at heart, GSOH, active, likes walking, gardening, meals out, travel, theatre and animals, looking for male friendship to share interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419657

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387175

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377397

MALE, widower, n/s, would love to meet buxom friendly lady, up to 70, for friendship at first, interests include all types of music, walking, quizzes. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422957

HELLO my name is Paul, 43, 5ft9, from Sittingbourne in Kent, looking for someone to have some fun with and see where it goes! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422905

WRITER, tall, slim, fit, natural dark hair, generous, seeks lady for erotic rendezvous, I will make it worth your while! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422777

49YR old male, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390929

SUGAR Daddy available! Mature, tall, slim, natural dark hair, seeks lady, age unimportant. Not afraid of commitment. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418889

PHILLIP, 66, into farming and country life, looking for a loyal, genuine lady, someone I can trust, to go on holidays with and spend time together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422699

TONY, early 60s, 6ft, slim, fit, easy going, looking for no strings fun with a lady, age unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422643

HANDSOME male, mid 40s, dark hair, hazel eyes, wishes to meet appropriate female for fun, friendship and perhaps more, please get in touch if interested. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422587



EDWARD, 77, looking for a companion South East area of Kent, for holidays, days out, social events, and lots more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423039

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719

TONY black male, 58, 5ft6, med build, n/s, seeking a local mature fun loving female 40/75 in the Chatham/Gillingham area for discreet fun. Text only Mailbox: 5459052

TALL single early 60's male looking for pure hearted lady for LTR. Text only Mailbox: 5496781

MALE, 54, shyish, looking for fun times with a lady, 60-70, with GSOH, status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424231

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights into seeks loving female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195

CHRIS, from Folkestone, 71, 5ft9, widower, green eyes, lonely, n/s, OHAC, likes gardening, the coast, pubs, dining out, holidays, cruises, days out, WLTW similar lady to share interests, can travel. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422375

SLIM straight guy into CD and role-play. WLTW similar for friendship and fun. Text only Mailbox: 5544057

CD male, into wrestling, looking for mature male, 65+, for first time experience. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424109

TV/BI CD, seeks feminine male with similar interests for discreet daytime meets. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406735

BI male, aged 54 seeks similar for friendship and fun. Text only Mailbox: 4623598

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970

MIKE, 64, outgoing person, enjoys life, likes sport, cricket, nice meals out, holidays, WLTW someone to share interests and quality time. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422329

COLIN, 56, 6ft, medium build, clean and tidy with a tidy beard, I'm after some TLC with no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423359

SLIM, 5ft 6 white male WLTW 18 to 42 year old lady for friendship. Text only Mailbox: 5441709

HARLOW male, 40, kind, attractive, happy, considerate looking to meet slim female for LTR, children welcome. Text only Mailbox: 5468389

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TERRY, 54, bi curious, looking for mature male, 65+, for first time experience. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424109

SLIM straight guy into CD and role-play. WLTW similar for friendship and fun. Text only Mailbox: 5544057

CD male, into wrestling, looking for mature male, 65+, for first time experience. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 424109

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Friends

FEMALE seeking genuine straight female for daytrips, out to meet socially for lunch/coffee. Text only to Mailbox No: 4748240

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WIZARDRY: Jamie Raven outside London's Magic Circle

BGT's Jamie Raven begins spell-binding magic tour

Raven tells KoS the reasons behind his love of magic and what his tour entails

HE was a huge success on Britain's Got Talent, coming second during the show's ninth series, and now Jamie Raven is embarking on his own UK tour.

Magic hasn't always been Mr Raven's passion though as he says: "I used to watch magic as a kid, at parties and on TV, but I wasn't too bothered about it."

"It wasn't until a holiday to India with my family, that my passion really developed."

"A magician came over to our table and taught me and my brother some tricks. From then on I'd save up my pocket money to go into London and visit the magic shops there."

From this hobby came Mr Raven's profession.

He claims that he was a professional magician for 11 years before he entered BGT and that he's "loved

performing magic my whole adult life." But when it came down to life goals, Mr Raven wanted more than a profession.

"I wanted to do theatre shows, but for this people need to know who you are or else they won't buy tickets. This is why I entered BGT," divulges Mr Raven.

In November and December of last year the magician headlined The Illusionists at The Shaftesbury Avenue Theatre, which went on to break box office records.

"The show was amazing. My friend who is in the same business as me but in Australia showed me the show's brochure and it just looked incredible. I knew I wanted to take part," he says. "The show broke box office records and was sold out over a period of eight and a half weeks."

From that moment, Mr Raven

knew he wanted to embark on a tour of his own over the UK.

"My show consists of a lot of different types of magic," he tells KoS. "There will be close up magic, illusions, and audience participation where I levitate someone. It's really just two hours of fun, laughing and tricks."

Although Mr Raven also states that each show is slightly different, so if you see it once, then you could see it a second time and still be entertained.

"I could just take the same show and do it again but I always like to keep moving forward, not back," the magician claims.

"But I add three of four new things. The second time someone comes to the show, there should be new things they've never seen before. This re-writing the show is a long process for me."

When asked what he'd like his audience to get out of coming to the show, Mr Raven says "Magic is my way of entertaining. I want you to love it and to come back to see me again."

"There's nothing like seeing magic live. It's just completely different live than it is on TV, it's pure live."

"I really want people to be amazed and to laugh a lot because that's what entertaining people is all about and that's why I do magic professionally."

The Jamie Raven Live tour is coming to Dartford's Orchard Theatre on November 5, following three special performances at London's Magic Circle.

Tickets can be purchased from box offices - for Dartford visit orchardtheatre.co.uk

For more info visit jamieraven.co.uk

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National Apple Festival

AT Brogdale National Apple Festival in Faversham, this year, there are 1,000 different apple varieties.

The festival takes place on October 15 and 16 and rural produce will be on sale.



Kids' charity giraffe trail

AROUND 50 papier maché giraffes will be in businesses and shop around Bromley, and each giraffe will be associated with a charity.

Children will be able to follow the trail to find and visit each giraffe from October 22 to 30.

To decorate a giraffe, email r.stanger2@ntlworld.com.

VANT to play support gig

YOU Me At Six have announced that VANT will support them for their tour date in Folkestone.

They're coming to Leas Cliff Hall on October 5.

For tickets, call 0844 871 3015.



Music Society 13th season

SITTINGBOURNE Music Society's 13th season will start with music from Charlotte Ashton's Flute Trio.

The concert is on October 7 at Highsted School and is supported by Making Music's Philip and Dorothy Green Award for Young Concert Artists.

Realistically gruesome scare attraction returns

By Emily King

emily.king@archant.co.uk

THIS Halloween visitors can discover a very different type of attraction at Fort Amherst.

Chatham's fort is usually known for its fascinating military history but work has already begun on transforming the site into tunnels of terrifying scenes inhabited by over 100 performers taking part in Fort Amherst's Halloween Horrors event.

Scare expert Pete Perez will be lending his creative talent to the project. He explains why his job matters to him: "There's nothing better than knowing thousands of people had so much fun because of something that originally existed only in your imagination, but was then brought to life by people wanting to give visitors an experience they won't forget."

Fort Amherst's marketing manager, Ross Friday, is a huge fan of the attraction's Halloween Horrors, having visited long before he worked there.

"It's a very unusual situation to be so heavily involved in an attraction with which I associate



so many memories – even if those memories are of being terrified," says Mr Friday.

"Every year I promise I won't put myself through it again and every year I do."

When asked why people still want to visit Fort Amherst's Halloween Horrors, Mr Friday comments: "It could be due to the volunteers who make it what it is – they're not there for wages but because they love what they do and I think that enthusiasm makes all the difference."

"I also wonder if the Fort's history plays a role – the area includes an ancient Saxon burial ground and is heavily researched by paranormal investigators who regularly report unexplained phenomena."

Halloween Horrors is taking place on October 21, 22, 28, and 29. A tamer version of the scare attraction is also taking place for children on October 26.

Tickets can be purchased by calling 01634 847747 or visiting fortamherst.com



HORRIFYING: Fort Amherst have brought in scare experts



HAUNTED: The sight has been visited by paranormal investigators



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Simply does it for food writer Diana Henry

Author reveals why she believes sharing recipes, and thinking less about what you cook is best...

WE tuck ourselves into a nook in an overcrowded cafe, and compare states of bedraggled-ness – Diana Henry's had a late night.

We're wedged in this fogged up cafe because the original venue, Henry's kitchen, is being hurriedly redecorated thanks to a leak just days before the launch party of her new book, *Simple*.

"It's nonsense that people can't cook, complete nonsense," the award-winning food writer says.

"If you like eating stuff and you know a few things you could make really good stuff."

Her 10th recipe collection, *Simple*, makes that process even easier.

Building on her fourth book, *Cook*

Simple, it's divided into clear sections, including chicken, fish and eggs, and provides straightforward ways to cook and eat them.

"I'm a food writer and I still think, 'What can I do with chops? What can I do with pasta?' And I think most people think about their weekday meals like that," says Henry, explaining her approach. "When I worked in telly, I used to come home on the Tube and keep a notebook which had lists in it: 'Chicken thighs – what you can do with them; Salmon fillets – what you can do with them,' and I just kept adding to that."

While the Northern Ireland-born journalist started out in TV, Henry, 52, switched to food writing when she had her first child.



TENTH BOOK: *Simple* is Diana Henry's 10th cook book

"I was a massively keen cook, had him, and I was just knackered! He cried all the time so I always had to carry him around," she remembers.

For some time, her first book was even going to be called *Cooking From The Hip*, as it was about cooking with one hand "because you had a baby in the other".

That baby just turned 18, but Henry still has "as much trouble as anyone else getting a meal on the table on a Wednesday night", so *Simple* is a way of solving that problem.

"People see cooking as a hobby. It's not a hobby – it's a non-negotiable life skill," she says matter-of-factly.

"I want people to love food and care about it, but at the same time, I want them to not think about it at all.

We've become really over-anxious about it," she muses. "Food's about memory and joyfulness."

You can find lots of recipes she's borrowed from friends in *Simple*.

"When you swap recipes, you have a connection. Food is about connecting, and I do like the process of cooking; I like dealing with olive oil and fish and cutting lemons," Henry explains. "That's another reason why I think we should cook every day, there's a real, small, sensual pleasure in it."

Ten books in, Henry is still planning another four ahead in her mind, with no sign of slowing. "I'm 52 now – someone suggested that it was about time I hung up my spurs. I thought, 'You've got to be kidding! I started doing this at 35, and I've hardly begun!'" she says with a grin.

The Glenn Miller story

SEVENTY years ago iconic singer Glenn Miller vanished over the English Channel as he flew to Paris to entertain troops during the Second World War.

His story is being told in a production by Bill Kenwright and Tommy Steele and it's coming to Dartford's Orchard Theatre from October 18 to 22.

Tickets are available via the box office on 01322 220000.

Uni of Kent concerts

PERCUSION group Kopanya launches a new season of lunchtime concerts this autumn at the University of Kent, Canterbury.

The group – Sam Wilson, Elsa Bradley, Craig Apps, and George English – have a CV that spans hip-hop, classical, folk, theatre, improv, jazz and the avant-garde.

All of these styles will be brought together in a programme showcasing a century of percussion music.

RTW Music Festival '16

THE Royal Tunbridge Wells International Music Festival 2016 begins on October 9 at Assembly Hall Tunbridge Wells.

The festival includes celebrations of Mozart, solo artists, a children's concert, piano quintets and more.

Tickets cost £9 for adults, £7 for children and £28 for a family of four.

To buy tickets, visit assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk or call 01892 530613

Harpist Lily Neill visits

INTERNATIONAL harpist Lily Neill aims to "open your eyes to the wealth and sound of the harp" at a Canterbury concert.

The concert takes place at the Sarah Thorne Company on October 15.

Tickets cost £10 when bought in advance and to members of the Sarah Thorne Theatre Company. Otherwise tickets are £12 on the door. Call the box office on 01843 863701.

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2016

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SHAMPAN

GROUP

Brexit may have come and gone and Britain is out of the EU, however, Shampan Group stands as proud and as ever popular!

A renowned and award-winning Indian restaurant group, which is arguably the finest in the UK's south-east, this year is very special to us. Not only are we marking the 5th fantastic anniversary of the opening of our flagship restaurant Shampan at the Spinning Wheel in Westerham, we are also celebrating 27 glorious years of Shampan Group.

This past year alone has been a very exciting one for Shampan – from awards and great events, to lovely weddings and lively parties, launches, corporate events, and much more!

Shampan at the Spinning proudly launched a fabulous new a la carte menu in early 2015, with our talented Executive Chef subsequently adding further items to enhance our traditional dishes. Using fresh ingredients, locally sourced wherever possible, we offer a well-rendered and elevated menu culminating in delectable and unmissable Indian cooking with sumptuous cocktails and wines to match.

The year also saw us continuing our strong links with our corporate friends who like all our customers, are always welcome at Shampan. A stunning and highly enjoyable evening was had by all as we hosted the launch of the all-new BMW 7 series and the

new MINI Clubman cars. The event certainly had the wow factor.

“The food at Shampan is served at such high quality, sometimes it's difficult to find fault even when you want to.”

Eatwithsteph.com

We kicked 2016 off with a bang, with a James Bond '007' themed New Year's Eve party and whilst we were still basking in the warm glow of Shampan at the Spinning Wheel winning the 'Best in South East' category at the prestigious British Curry Awards 2015. This was the third overall win for the restaurant and no less than a fifth time win at the awards for Shampan Group as a whole. A huge cause for celebration amongst the group as well as our loyal and dedicated customers.

Over the summer we had the great opportunity of working alongside Biggin Hill Airport at the Festival of Flight 2016. We were chosen by the airport Director to provide the 'Shampan Experience' for his VIP guests; we showed off our excellent

“A carefully crafted menu, including sensational fish dishes, is both delicious and beautifully presented.”

[The Daily Telegraph](http://TheDailyTelegraph.com)



www.shampangroup.com

hospitality with a beautifully laid lunch to local dignitaries and businesspersons within the VIP enclosure of the event and immersed ourselves into the atmosphere of the sight spectacular event. We have been overwhelmed with the outstanding feedback that we've had since the event, on our food as well as our wonderful staff and the Shampan Group as a whole; it was great seeing the three restaurant teams coming together to work as one and we are looking forward to repeating the experience again in the future.



The excitement continues with Shampan Bromley, as we are pleased to announce that we have recently closed their doors on a temporary basis while we start our refurbishments. We are really looking forward to unveiling the spanking new look which is sure to delight all the restaurant's followers as well as enticing a whole new group of fans to its midst. Rest assured, our cooking will be just as good as ever!

The icing on top of the cake of fabulous news is that we would like to announce that we will soon be launching a new look website for Shampan Group which will be easier to navigate and provide our clientele with an insight into what we have to offer as a Group of restaurants as well as reflect the individual personalities we offer within our doors.

"The decor and
ambiance of
Shampan at the
Spinning Wheel is
excellent and the
food is thought
provoking and full
of quality.
Understandably it
has already become
a destination
restaurant and
offers a unique
package I have not
come across
before."

Menu Magazine & Founder of
National Curry Week



SHAMPAN

BROMLEY

38 Chatterton Rd,
Bromley, Kent, BR2 9QN

T: 020 8460 7169

SHAMPAN

WELLING

8 Falconwood Parade, The Green,
Welling, Kent, DA16 2PL

T: 020 8304 9569

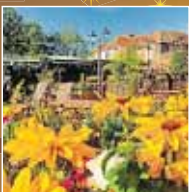
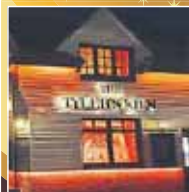
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T: 01227 833830 W: www.whitehorsebridge.co.uk E: info@whitehorsebridge.co.uk



Christmas Parties

THIS
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including the Jingle Bell Bar

From Thursday 1st December & throughout December, The Little Garden will be hosting the 'Jingle Bell Bar', an outdoor Christmas pop-up bar. Set in our decked courtyard, will be a welcoming Winter Wonderland including a gingerbread house bar, heaters to keep you toasty, festive music and festive themed drinks.

This year there are 2 menus for the perfect party.
A 3 course Christmas Party Menu for those looking for a traditional sit down celebration and a 'Stand up and Mingle' menu for parties that want to do just that!
Deposits required, please see website for further details and prices.



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Don't miss out on Canterbury's Tyler's Kiln

NESTLED in the medieval hamlet of Tyler Hill, surrounded by ancient woodland and just five minutes outside of Canterbury, The Tyler's Kiln is a pub not to be missed.

The bar area is dominated by a huge kiln containing two roaring open fires and there is plenty of space to cosy up to a fire in a comfy leather armchair.

Upstairs you will find a private dining room, a hidden snug and a museum featuring original 700-year-old tiles discovered from the medieval kilns that gave the pub its name.

The restaurant has seating both upstairs and downstairs, and boasts mouth-watering lunch and evening menus that change with the seasons.

The Tyler's Kiln has gained a reputation for serving high-quality home-cooked British cuisine using locally sourced produce.

Venture out into the garden and sit next to the beautiful copper tree water feature and listen to the sound of

raindrops fall from its leaves into the fish pond below. Protect yourself from rain or sun at the touch of a button with automatic awnings, and extend your evening with the warmth of over-head and under-bench heating.

Offers include steak and wine night on Tuesday, pie and pint night on Wednesday, as well as half-price taxis also being available.

There's no place like The Tyler's Kiln, come and see for yourself: Hackington Road, Tyler Hill, Canterbury, CT2 9NE.

Call 01227 471 912, or visit thetylerskiln.co.uk to book.



Pop by Tiny Tim's Tearoom

CANTERBURY'S finest traditional English tearoom, Tiny Tim's Tearoom was awarded Kent tea Shop of the Year at the Food & Drink Awards 2015.

It offers the quintessential English experience where you can step back in time to a golden age when taking tea was a social event.

Now under new management, the tearoom offers afternoon tea, cream tea and high tea as well as having a breakfast and lunch menu and is fully licensed.

Over the next few months you can enjoy special treats tailored for Halloween and Christmas, including chocolate pilgrims, toffee apples, ghostly cupcakes, advents pilgrims, Christmas cake, mince meat treats and homemade Christmas pudding.

We also have Afternoon Tea for Two Vouchers on sale which can make a lovely gift.

Will be open Mondays from 17th October 9.30am-5pm

Tuesday to Saturday 9.30am-5pm, Sunday 10.30am-4pm

We do not take reservations, but please drop by and grab a table!



HOMELY: Cakes are homemade



PICTURESQUE: The garden is surrounded by beautiful trees, plants and fairy lights

The Little Garden is a breath of fresh air for central Sevenoaks

Located in central Sevenoaks, The Little Garden restaurant, bar and grill is a modern, contemporary restaurant with an international menu prepared by talented chefs.

The restaurant features a charcoal Josper grill – an enclosed charcoal oven that adds a unique, unbeatable flavour, and the international menu

changes seasonally. Whether you enjoy charcoal-fired steaks, fresh fish or vegetarian dishes, there is something for everyone.

The enticing bar is equipped to complement the restaurant's menu, with a fantastic list of cocktails, carefully selected wine and craft beer.

The Little Garden has plenty of space, as it's spread over two floors. The interior is stylishly decorated,

with exposed brickwork and leather banquette seating.

Arguably the jewel in the restaurant's crown, however, is the private secluded courtyard. This charming outdoor space has been transformed into a beautiful heated, decked area, surrounded by beds of box hedging, cyclamen and ivy, and set underneath a stunning old tree lit up by twinkling fairy lights.

What more could you ask for?

CHEF RECOMMENDS

The Tyler's Kiln

Hackington Road, Tyler Hill, Canterbury, CT2 9NE
Telephone: 01227 471912
Website: thetylerskiln.co.uk

Main: PAN-FRIED SEABASS with roasted Mediterranean vegetables and mango & chilli salsa £17.50

Dessert: CHOCOLATE MARQUEISE
Smooth rich chocolate parfait, toffee sauce, toasted almonds and vanilla ice cream. £6.50

The Little Garden

Well Court, 1 Bank Street, Sevenoaks, TN13 1UN
Telephone: 01732 469397
Website: thelittlegardensevenoaks.com

Main: JOSPER "BARGAIN BUCKET"
Chicken wings, Chorizo, Beer Battered Bacon, Onion Rings with rose Harissa mayonnaise & sesame honey & soy £6.95

Dessert: STICKY TOFFEE BAKED ALASKA
Sticky toffee pudding, Madagascan vanilla bean ice cream, Italian meringue, toasted hazelnuts & toffee sauce £6.00

Tiny Tim's Tearoom

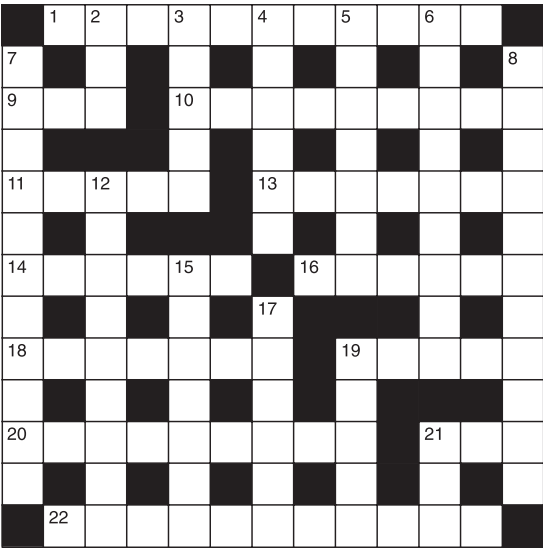
34 St. Margaret's Street, Canterbury, CT1 1TG
Telephone: 01227 450793
Website: tinytimstearoom.com

Main: MEATLOAF PUFFKIN
Homemade pork and beef meatloaf wrapped in puff pastry served hot with baked beans and a poached egg OR cold with salad and coleslaw £10.50

Dessert: AFTERNOON CREAM TEA
£18.50 per person

PUZZLES

DOUBLE CROSSWORD



Quick

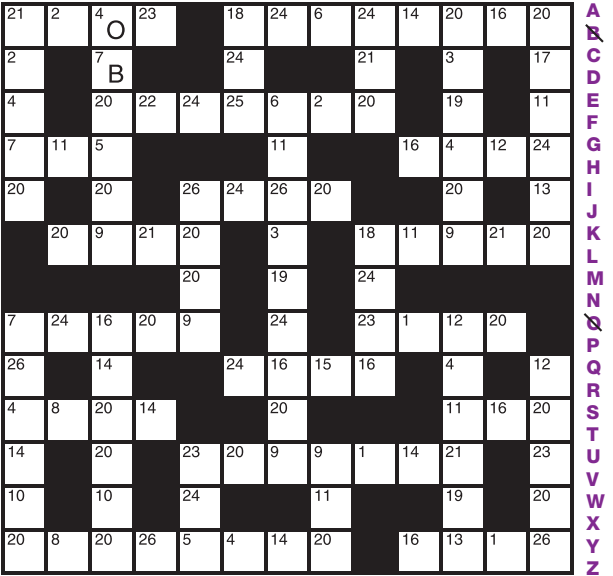
- Across**
- 1. Impartially (11)
 - 9. Permit (3)
 - 10. Revolt (9)
 - 11. Overturn (5)
 - 13. Bounce (7)
 - 14. Maltreat (3-3)
 - 16. Ebb (6)
 - 18. Press release (7)
 - 19. Appointment (5)
 - 20. Beginners (9)
 - 21. Pale (3)
 - 22. Forerunner (11)
- Down**
- 2. Gamble (3)
 - 3. Heron (5)
 - 4. Tunic (6)
 - 5. Talkative (7)
 - 6. Unhurried (9)
 - 7. Prosperous (11)
 - 8. Accidental (11)
 - 12. Brilliance (9)
 - 15. Allied (7)
 - 17. Stationary (6)
 - 19. Jobs (5)
 - 21. Court (3)

Cryptic

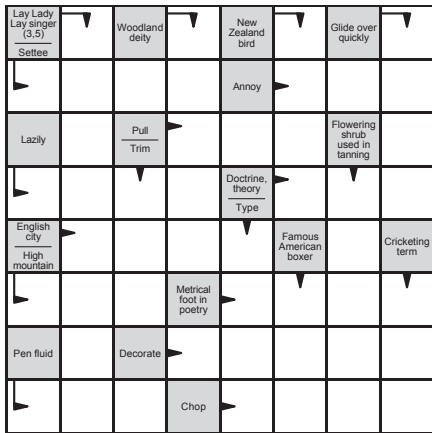
- Across**
- 1. At least zero subtraction (7,4)
 - 9. Spoil return of sheep (3)
 - 10. Courageous about engineering a win? What a brilliant ideal! (9)
 - 11. A number had a meal, we hear (5)
 - 13. Allowed nine inside to go out, being easy-going (7)
 - 14. Unfortunately left a young head to show feudal loyalty (6)
 - 16. Making a request from the throne? (6)
 - 18. Smartly dressed in the past in America (7)
 - 19. Being split, 100 went away (5)
 - 20. Lose one's permanent address? (5,4)
 - 21. Obligation to achieve the same score (3)
 - 22. Put off at line-out, showing respect (11)
- Down**
- 2. Blade interfering person puts in (3)
 - 3. Special clothes as a regular course (5)
 - 4. Almost close to the second part of July (6)
 - 5. Gin sling without topping or covering the insides (7)
 - 6. Is it left when one's watch is fast? (5,4)
 - 7. Faulty when Percy left? I'm not certain (11)
 - 8. Reach the end of spring before getting out there for an assembly (3-8)
 - 12. Tend to move towards some thing via target (9)
 - 15. Bar in the air demanding acrobatic manoeuvres (7)
 - 17. There's nothing in code to cause to be gloomy (6)
 - 19. Teach to be dishonest (5)
 - 21. Beverage taken in the late afternoon (3)

CODEWORD

This puzzle has no clues. Instead, every number printed in the grid represents a letter, with the same number always representing the same letter. For example, if 8 turns out to be a V, you can write in V wherever a square contains 8. Using your knowledge of words, complete the puzzle.



Arrowword



Enter your answers in the direction indicated by the arrows.

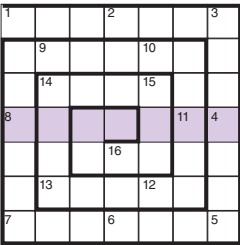
Battleships

Find where ships shown below are hidden in the grid. The numbers to the right of and below the grid indicate how many of the squares in that row are filled in with ships or parts of ships. The ships do not touch each other, even diagonally. Some of the squares have been filled to start you off.

THE FLEET
1 x Battleship
2 x Cruiser
3 x Destroyer
4 x Submarine



Word Spiral



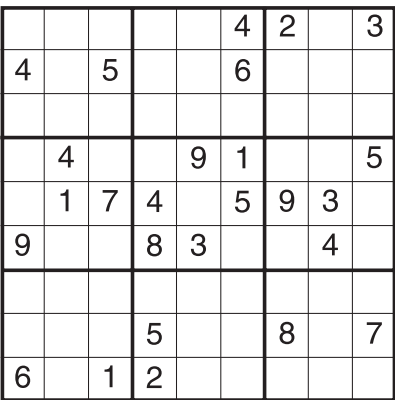
Starting from 1, fill in the grid clockwise with four-letter words. The last letter of each word becomes the first letter of the next to reveal the key word in the shaded boxes.

- 1. Applaud
- 2. Hairstyle
- 3. Grumble
- 4. Midday
- 5. No votes
- 6. Search
- 7. Bird
- 8. Object of worship
- 9. Volcanic discharge
- 10. Opera song
- 11. Very keen
- 12. Profound
- 13. Walkway
- 14. Damage
- 15. Temperate
- 16. Trade

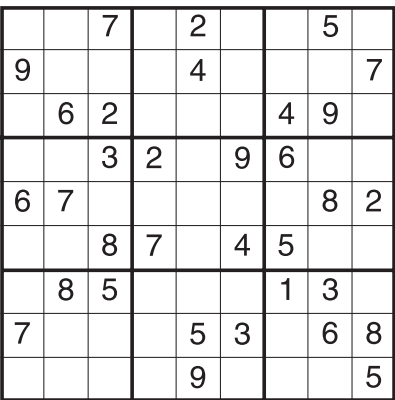
Keyword clue: A European language

SUDOKU

Hard



Easy



Solutions

Double Crossword

Cryptic

Across

- 1 Clap: 2 Perm: 3 Moan: 4 Noon: 5 Nays: 6 Seek: 7 Kiwi: 8 Idol: 9 Lava: 10 Upset: 13 Rebound: 14 Ill-use: 16 Recede: 18 Handout: 19 Tryst: 20 Neophytes: 21 Wan: 22 Predecessor: 23 Defiant: 24 Te: 25 Trapeze: 26 Gai: 27 Imperfectly: 28 Get: 29 Linings: 30 Spare time: 31 Car: 3 Habit: 4 Neatly: 22 Deferential: 23 Te: 24 Leave home: 25 Chicago: 19 Clean: 20 Really: 16 Asking: 18 11: 21: 22: 23: 24: 25: 26: 27: 28: 29: 30: 31: 32: 33: 34: 35: 36: 37: 38: 39: 40: 41: 42: 43: 44: 45: 46: 47: 48: 49: 50: 51: 52: 53: 54: 55: 56: 57: 58: 59: 60: 61: 62: 63: 64: 65: 66: 67: 68: 69: 70: 71: 72: 73: 74: 75: 76: 77: 78: 79: 80: 81: 82: 83: 84: 85: 86: 87: 88: 89: 90: 91: 92: 93: 94: 95: 96: 97: 98: 99: 100: 101: 102: 103: 104: 105: 106: 107: 108: 109: 110: 111: 112: 113: 114: 115: 116: 117: 118: 119: 120: 121: 122: 123: 124: 125: 126: 127: 128: 129: 130: 131: 132: 133: 134: 135: 136: 137: 138: 139: 140: 141: 142: 143: 144: 145: 146: 147: 148: 149: 150: 151: 152: 153: 154: 155: 156: 157: 158: 159: 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Give us access all areas

Looking for a holiday cottage with good wheelchair access and facilities? Here are some suggestions...

Inspired by the Paralympics, self catering company Premier Cottages have compiled a list of holiday properties perfect for wheelchair users and those with restricted mobility. You can contact the owners direct, or through www.premiercottages.co.uk

1. Kerridge End, Cheshire

In beautiful grounds, a week's stay for up to six at wheelchair friendly The Hayloft, starts from £595. Handy for visiting Bakewell.

2. Arbor Holiday & Knightcote cottages, Warwickshire
Ideal for visiting Oxford, Stratford and Warwick, a week for six in Home Cottage, suitable for independent wheelchair users, starts from £734.

3. Wallops Woods, Hampshire
Cottages come with a spacious en-suite wet room. Attractions include Peppa Pig World and the Mary Rose. Enjoy a week's stay for

six from £785.

4. Beacon Hill, Northumberland

The beautiful skies at night can be enjoyed from its own observatory. Beacon Hill has a spa and three cottages have roll-in showers with a shower wheelchair. A week's stay for up to four starts at £310.

■ Arbor and Knightcote boating lake

■ Guests can use the observatory at Beacon Hill

■ Lovely grounds at Kerridge End, Cheshire



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Don't believe the airport support

I WAS interested to read RiverOak's proud proclamation that 90 per cent of attendees at their recent consultation events expressed support for the reopening of Manston Airport [KoS, last week].

RiverOak are fully aware that this number is not truly representative of the feedback provided at the consultation events, because, by their own admission, not all feedback forms that were submitted at the events made their way to RiverOak's agents, Bircham Dyson Bell.

My feedback form, for example, disappeared without trace.

Now, it may well be entirely coincidental that my form, which was not supportive of the reopening of the airport, disappeared after being collected by a member of the Save Manston Airport group who was volunteering at the event.

However, given this campaign group's treatment of anyone who is opposed to the reopening of the airport, it is enough to raise more than an eyebrow on my part about such informal and poorly controlled handling of the personal data submitted on those forms.

It certainly makes me wonder whether any of the data presented by RiverOak following the consultation has any validity whatsoever, after all, if my form was 'lost', how many others suffered a similar fate?

Robert Bird,
 Ramsgate

Message to Stone Park brigade

LAST week we have seen the overwhelming true childishness of Stone Hill Park come to the fore, as their righteous spokesman continues to insult RiverOak, and refuse them access to the Manston Airport site to conduct vital surveys.

I think I speak for a lot of people when I say: "Grow up!"

Ralph Allison,
 Gillingham

Ship history is not all to cheer

I HOPE the Chatham Dockyard Trust will next year remember it was 450 years ago it finished restoring the Jesus of Lubeck and the Minion for John Hawkyns for use in the trade in enslaved Africans [KoS, last week].

The restoration was partly financed by Queen Elizabeth I, intent on stopping Portugal's supremacy, and on participating in this very lucrative trade.

Marika Sherwood,
 Oare

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Lilac Sky is a warning of academy dangers

LAST week, Kent County Council's director of education, Patrick Leeson, confirmed at a meeting of the education cabinet committee that the multi academy trust Lilac Sky [which was responsible for five academies in Kent and four in Sussex] had failed and had been removed from a number of schools in Kent by the regional schools commissioner.

He described this as disruptive for children's education and said it was outrageous that the trust had appropriated funding intended for education.

Across the country, this is far from being an isolated event and the Local Government Association has called for more locally accountable monitoring while the chief inspector of education, Sir Michael Wilshaw, questions the value of creating more academies as "there are a lot of mediocre multi academy trusts out there".

The Local Government Association has also calculated that

if the government persists with its plans to make all schools academies it will cost £320 million, money that should be spent on improving our local authority schools.

There are several downsides to the academy programme and no apparent advantages.

We have heard a lot of vain rhetoric about "freeing schools from the dead hand of local education authorities" (LEAs) but what LEAs do is ensure each child is valued equally, that access to schools is based on fair principles, that programmes of school improvement are put in place and that public money intended for education is properly used for education.

Labour does not want schools free of these responsibilities and Labour county councillors will do all we can to resist the valueless spread of these locally unaccountable trusts.

Roger Truelove
 Deputy leader of the Labour group on Kent County Council, County Hall Maidstone

Another of the Ray Duff fan club

CONCERNING Ray Duff's rant [KoS 18.09] and his views against our country and his opinions on empire and so on.

Does he also think the generations to come should be blamed for what happens here and now? Of course not. We are a democratic country, and the majority voted to leave the EU – so get used to it Mr Duff.

One last point, if Mr Duff is so ashamed and hates this country so

much he can feel free to leave. That is his democratic right, of which he sees fit to deny the other people of this great country.

P Dean,
 Brooklands

We should have stayed in the EU

SO the usual from the Brexiteers [KoS, letters, last week], thus to Mary McNulty I say that globalised trade and war-zones – 65 million people displaced – require campaigning for

international co-operation and action to reform and resolve such.

Brexit solves nothing, nor indeed anything on the list from Clive Wilkins-Oppler, whom I thank for his condemnation of hate-crimes, but point out that: The Federation of Small Businesses has just reported a sharp slump in confidence; the east Folkestone area is set to lose a £5 million EU grant help money – as are many other areas – and likely sans replacement; the Bank of England reports firms freezing investments and recruitment while City analysts suggest 100,000 finance sector jobs may be at risk; and pension pots are suffering and so on.

To Mr Hudson-Gool, any truly 'exceptional Britain', would remain in the EU and fight for the needed ground up reforms required to benefit the whole of Europe, not run away behind barriers.

Further, I have long campaigned against trade deals like TTIP, which is still not yet ended, and the Canada (CETA) version has passed all its main stages and will need a major last ditch effort to stop. The similar TISA (services) one also needs major campaigns against.

Any EU exit would just leave us open to the Tories imposing bi-lateral versions of the same via the World Trade Organisation, and when any such, be they by EU or UK, actually need to be on a genuinely fair trade-only basis and with the secret three-person-only dispute panels scrapped.

As for my emigrating I could have as most of my immediate family now live in Australia from where they backed remain including my mother, 84, who has far 'sharper' words for Brexiters than I. But my situation today doesn't allow. So I just welcome refugees here and have sent supplies to the Calais camps.

Finally I make no apology for using Jo Cox's words, but they were not aimed at Mr Granger personally – just his lauding of Mr Farage who fronted that appalling anti-refugee poster and much else. Mrs Cox helped refugees, backed remain and would very likely have continued even now.

Ray Duff,
 Folkestone

Don't ignore TV licensing change

SOME of your readers may be unaware of a change in the law which means that from September 1, 2016, you need to be covered by a TV licence to watch or download BBC programmes on demand on BBC iPlayer – including catch-up TV. This applies to all devices.

If unsure visit: www.tvlicensing.co.uk/iplayerinfo.

Ben Craig,
 TV licensing London and south east

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.

- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to North & West

people living in the county.
 9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
 10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.
kent-life.co.uk kentnews.co.uk



Stonebridge Pond, Faversham
by **Colin Miles, from Bapchild**

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SCANDINAVIAN: seeks discerning buyers attracted by technological prowess, an emphasis on safety and a classy cabin

Volvo back in the big time?

PREVIEW: No turrets adorn the new S90 as Volvo aims to reclaim a once lofty status in the big car sector...

VOLVO used to do well with big cars, though robust styling often drew unflattering comparisons with trucks.

The Swedish marque's designs have shaped up better more recently, but sales have still been hit by a down-sizing trend that has trimmed the whole big car sector.

Volvo's outgoing S80 saloon – worthy, though it was – also struggled to match the cachet and driver engagement of German rivals.

But BMW and Co may not have it so easy with the arrival of the Volvo's all-new S90 saloon and equivalent V90 estate.

They are lighter, stiffer, and more spacious, eco-friendly and tax efficient, all helped by a modular vehicle platform developed for a whole new generation of Volvos.

The low slung S90 also looks superb and is eco-friendly for such a big car: diesel CO2 emissions are as low as 116g/km (S90) or 119g/km (V90), thereby attracting just £20 a year road tax after year one.

A 'Twin Engine' petrol-electric plug-in hybrid is also planned with an estimated 30-mile all-electric range and claimed official fuel economy of more than 100mpg.

This won't come cheap, but no S90 will be a snip; rather than hunting big volumes, the newcomer will be pitched higher than the S80 –



from £32,555, with the V90 attracting a £2,000 premium – and seek discerning buyers attracted by technological prowess, Volvo's traditional emphasis on safety, and a classy Scandinavian cabin – a latter day brand hallmark.

Volvo seems to have created the in-car touchscreen of the moment too: first seen on its

XC90, this could be the motoring equivalent of the iPad, with a big display and intuitive operation – a sharp contrast to so many on the market at present.

It could give the brand an edge, especially with all-new BMW 5 Series and Mercedes-Benz E-Class rivals available.

Astra - A lifestyle estate that works

Vauxhall's European Car of the Year has spawned an estate that looks good and delivers excellent load carrying capacity writes **Steve Loader...**

CAR buyers are turning away from MPVs. They were never trendy and it has become clear that only users desperate for passenger and load space, will remain loyal to something so bland to look at and drive – with few exceptions.

The 'deserters' have gone in two directions: firstly, to the burgeoning crossover and SUV sector, though these can be as unlovable and rubbish to drive as an MPV.

The second option is estates, where manufacturers have made them look trendier while retaining decent load carrying capacity – the Peugeot 308SW, Skoda Octavia and VW Golf estate models being good examples of this 'having your cake and eating it' approach.

And Vauxhall makes a similar pitch with the latest Astra estate: the previous car – the first to adopt the marque's Sports Tourer label – looked sleek, but wasn't one of the most capacious load luggers.

This year's replacement has the looks, plus the space to compare favourably with the above rivals – 540 litres with rear seatbacks up and 1,630 when folded.

OK, so the side view is not as polished as before, but the new



Sports Tourer also benefits from being derived from the much-admired Astra hatchback, the current European Car of the Year.

Vauxhall and sister brand Opel cut the weight of two average UK male passengers compared to the previous Astra, to boost handling, power and economy.

Savings came from lighter yet

stronger materials and sometimes incremental shavings from components like the exhaust system, brakes and wheels.

And while similar in size to its predecessor, the new Sports Tourer, is far roomier inside and more comfortable – even luxurious – yet feels as nimble as a supermini.

Vauxhall also tuned the British-built



car's chassis on our roads, a baptism guaranteeing it will perform on extreme surfaces elsewhere in Europe.

The dashboard is neat and well-organised with a user-friendly touchscreen. The ground-breaking, potentially lifesaving, OnStar system is also offered: a high-speed 4G mobile network, emergency response notification and stolen vehicle

Vauxhall Astra Sports Tourer 1.6 CDTI 160 Bi-Turbo SRi Nav

Price:	from £23,535
Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★★
Best rival:	Ford Focus

recovery alert – it works.

Lightweight and lively powertrains complement the car too. I like the all-new 1.4-litre turbo petrol tested previously on the hatchback, but the estate tested here has another impressive newcomer, the 1.6-litre bi-turbodiesel.

It's smooth and flexible thanks to two turbos working in harness for all situations, while still logging an official combined 68.9mpg and the lowest payable CO2 emissions (109g/km) – currently just £20/year road tax after year one.

What's not to like? Vauxhall's problem is its badge. The General Motors brand is in transition, aiming to move upmarket – highlighted by some of the best interiors in the business – and wants to shrug off its 'repmobile reputation'. All it can do is to keep plugging away and winning awards – on merit.

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By Rail from Ebbsfleet or Air from Gatwick 3 April, 2017 • Quote: BD4-KOS

Join us for a fun and friendly cruise on board the MV Prinses Christina. A visit to Holland in springtime is a mesmerising feast for the senses as the gardens and fields are full to bursting with tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, spring flowering shrubs and plants. The highlight of this cruise is an included visit to Keukenhof Gardens with its magnificent floral displays. There is time to explore the canals, museums and flower markets of Amsterdam, plus Enkhuizen and Hoorn.

Price includes: Return rail travel by Eurostar from St Pancras and Ebbsfleet OR flights with luggage from Gatwick - supp't may apply • 4-nights full board cruise sharing a twin bed outside cabin on Cabin Deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine by the glass, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Visit to Keukenhof Gardens • Entertainment • Transfers abroad • Services of our Cruise Director on board



8 days
full board
from
£799_{pp}

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Deposit

Rhine & Moselle River Cruise

4 June & 3 September, 2017 - Quote: RH-KOS

Come with us on a relaxing river cruise on the majestic Rhine and beautiful Moselle rivers in southern Germany. Relax on board the MV Prinses Christina as she glides silkily past romantic hilltop castles, picturesque vineyards and historic riverside towns. To join the ship, we travel by Eurostar from St Pancras and Ebbsfleet or fly from a choice of UK airports, then a short transfer by coach. Our cruise visits Andernach, Cochem, Boppard, Rudesheim, Koblenz, Konigswinter and Cologne. Accommodation is in comfortable outside twin cabins with breakfast, lunch and dinner each day included as well as morning coffee and afternoon tea.

INCLUDED: Escorted throughout • Return rail travel from London St Pancras and Ebbsfleet OR flights with luggage from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply • 7-nights full board cruise on the MV Prinses Christina sharing a twin bed outside cabin on Cabin Deck - upgrades available • Transfers abroad



Super 60s Christmas Party Weekend



Free drinks
Entertainment
Over 40s only

3 nights
half board
plus
£249_{pp}

Warner Norton Grange, Isle of Wight

Friday 25 November, 2016 • Quote: NG11-KOS

Great Entertainment, a fab festive atmosphere, free drinks every evening, good food, comfortable centrally-heated chalets, free car ferry and a super location make Warner's Norton Grange resort, on the Isle of Wight, our most popular over 40s Christmas Party venue. We've booked the whole resort for an exclusive celebration with a super entertainment programme featuring 60s band Union Gap, Roy Carter of Heatwave, a Rod Stewart tribute and more.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - house beers and spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks and mixers • 60s themed entertainment programme • 3 nights standard en-suite chalet - upgrades available: Standard-Plus £15pp; Premier £30pp • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Return car ferry



Abbey Court School provides a stimulating, challenging and safe learning environment where pupils and staff efforts, work and achievement are celebrated.

We are currently looking for an...

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

to join and enhance our high calibre team on a 1 year Fixed Term Contract
 Soulbury scale – A range point 2-7 (£36,804 - £45,588)
 (term time only - pro rata. Part time or full time hours may be considered)

Previous SPAs will be honoured

Abbey Court School is currently located on 2 sites; Rainham (Nursery and Primary) and Strood (Secondary and Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 3-19 with Severe Learning Difficulties. We are looking for an enthusiastic and experienced Educational Psychologist, with a professional and flexible approach. In essence, somebody with an interest in a special educational setting who is committed to applying interventions over time to enable pupils to achieve best possible outcomes. The post holder will be offered the opportunity to work as an applied psychologist, express their creativity, work holistically and demonstrate their strengths whilst undertaking a wide variety of tasks within the post. The role will require partnership working with pupils, parents, staff and other professionals.

Working hours are 37.5 hours p/w, term time only. Candidates should be HCPC registered Educational Psychologists. The successful candidate will work as part of a multi-professional team at the school. Benefits include: Local Authority pension scheme, induction training, performance management programme and Continuous Professional Development. Visits to the school are welcomed.

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.

Closing Date: 7 October 2016, Interview Date: 17 October 2016

For an application pack, or to make an appointment to visit, please contact Mrs Linda Taylor, Business Manager, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent, ME2 3SP (01634 338236), stating the position for which you are applying.

Please note CV's will not be accepted

Bradstow School

Living and learning together within a culture of gentleness

Bradstow is a creative and unique residential school for children between the ages of 5 & 19. It is situated in 13 acres of parkland just a few hundred metres from the sandy beaches of Broadstairs. We seek to meet the needs of children and young people with autism and severe learning difficulties with associated behaviours that may be challenging. We have achieved national recognition for our developments in Communication and Behaviour Management.

KEYWORKER – Extended Provision

Working as part of the childcare team, this role involves providing care and support to students mornings, evenings and weekends being a student's Keyworker and some management responsibility.
 £22,442 - £25,416 pa - 41 hours per week. All year round

TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS – Residential Care

As part of the childcare team, these roles involve providing care and support to the children and young people in the residential home mornings, evenings and weekends. These roles are aimed at candidates with some experience of Care work.

£14,338 - £15,207 plus 10% pa - 41 hours per week, (including weekends) – Term time only, plus 2 weeks *

CHILDCARE SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

As part of the childcare teams, these roles involve providing care and support to the children and young people mornings, evenings and weekends. No experience required, full training will be given.

£11,752 - £12,085 plus 10% pa – 36.5 hours per week, (including weekends – more hours available) – Term time only, plus 2 weeks* or 15 hours per week part-time pro-rata.

FEMALE WAKING NIGHT ATTENDANT – Extended Provision

To be responsible for the supervision and care of the children and young people at night.
 £23,459 - £26,144 (inc half night allowance) - 36% hours per week, (nights inc weekends) All Year Round
 Due to the nature of the personal care being provided, Section 7 (2) (a) of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 applies

WEEKEND TEAM SUPPORT WORKER – Childcare

As part of the childcare team, these roles involve providing care and support to students in Childcare Teams during weekends. These roles are aimed at candidates with some experience of Care work.

£14,338 per annum – pro-rata 15 hours per week, (weekends) Term time only, plus 2 weeks *

Also available

FLEXIBANK TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS

We have some additional opportunities to provide additional cover within either the classrooms or residences on an ad-hoc hourly paid basis, up to 41 hours per week including split shifts and weekends. Please contact us for further details.

*For these roles there will also be up to a maximum of two weeks for the school's respite care provision if required, for which extra payment would be paid.

For all posts we look for candidates who are able to demonstrate maturity, and who are warm, creative and open to learning. Candidates must have a patient and caring attitude and be able to deal sensitively with vulnerable children.

We are committed to sustainability and preserving the environment and therefore encourage applications by email, so for an application form and information pack please email personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk.

Or you may call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine).

Please note that CV's will not be considered.

The closing date for all applications is midnight Thursday 13th October 2016.



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Permanent

Maidstone & Canterbury

Reference number: 1508121

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The Crown Prosecution Service is the principal public prosecuting agency for conducting criminal prosecutions in England and Wales. It is headed by the Director of Public Prosecutions. Its main responsibilities are to provide legal advice to the police and other investigative agencies during the course of criminal investigations, to decide whether a suspect should face criminal charges following an investigation and to conduct prosecutions both in the magistrates' courts and the Crown Court.

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If you have strong administrative skills, work well with people and a commitment to delivering justice, we want to hear from you.

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Closing date: 17 October 2016.

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"We grow people"

Abbey Court School, a 'special' school and a 'special' place to work.

We are currently looking for a...

Speech and Language Therapist

to join and enhance our high calibre team on a temporary contract, commencing ASAP and ending July 2017

Medway Scale, Grade B2 - £28,203 to £36,019 pro rata

(term time only - part time or full time hours may be considered)

Abbey Court School is located on 2 sites; Rainham (Primary) and Strood (Secondary and Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 3-19 with severe learning difficulties. We are looking for an enthusiastic and effective Speech and Language Therapist, with a professional, flexible approach and a good sense of humour. In essence, somebody with an interest in an educational setting and who would like to work in a school committed to enabling pupils to reach their full potential.

Experience and dysphagia training desirable.

Candidates should hold a relevant Speech and Language Therapy degree/qualification. Benefits include: Local Authority pension scheme, induction training, performance management programme and Continuous Professional Development.

Visits to the school are welcomed.

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount, and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

For an application pack, or to make an appointment to visit, please telephone (stating the role for which you are applying):

Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent ME2 3SP (01634 338236)

Please note CV's will *not* be accepted.

Closing date: **7 October 2016**

Interview Date: **17 October 2016**

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES



**MARINE AND COASTAL ACCESS ACT 2009
ESSEX ESTUARIES BOTTOM TRAWLING
(PROHIBITED AREAS) BYELAW**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: The Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority intends to apply to the Minister for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for confirmation of an Essex Estuaries Bottom Trawling (Prohibited Areas) Byelaw to prohibit the use of all types of bottom trawl in specified areas to protect the designated features of those areas and therefore prevent damage to or deterioration of the site.

During the period of 28 days from the date of the publication of this Notice a copy of the Byelaw and Impact Assessment will be deposited at the offices of the applicant, at the address given below and at www.kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk.

Objections or representations concerning this notification should be made within 28 days of the date of this notice to both addresses given below:

Marine Conservation and Enforcement Team

Marine Management Organisation

Lancaster House

Hampshire Court

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE4 7YH

or ifcabylaws@marinemangement.org.uk

Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

Paragon House

Albert Street

Ramsgate

Kent

CT11 9HD

or info@kentandessex-ifca.gov.uk

PUBLIC NOTICE

LICENSING ACT 2003

Notice is hereby given that Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority intends to apply to the Minister for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for confirmation of an Essex Estuaries Bottom Trawling (Prohibited Areas) Byelaw to prohibit the use of all types of bottom trawl in specified areas to protect the designated features of those areas and therefore prevent damage to or deterioration of the site.

Please mention this paper when replying to Small Ads

**PUBLIC NOTICE
Licencing Act 2005**

A variation application has been made by: **Bredhurst Village Hall Management Committee, Hurstwood Road, Bredhurst Village, Kent ME7 3JZ**

We would like to vary the license to allow the sale alcohol at the premise. Sale by retail of alcohol –

Monday to Thursday 07:00 PM 10:00 PM

Friday 06:00 PM 11:30 PM

Saturday 11:00 AM 11:30 PM

Sunday 11:00 AM 10:30 PM

Extend licence on the 31st December to sell alcohol until 12:30AM on January 1st.

We would like the following embedded conditions removed from the license:

3. A new Fire Equipment Certificate shall be forwarded to this office prior to or on the date of expiry of the current Certificate on 31 October 2005, and thereafter each year on the anniversary of this date.

4. A new Electrical Certificate shall be forwarded to this office prior to or on the date of expiry of the current Certificate on 1 December 2005, and thereafter each year on the anniversary of this date.

5. A new Emergency Lighting Certificate shall be forwarded to this office prior to or on the date of expiry of the current Certificate on 1 December 2005, and thereafter each year on the anniversary of this date.

A fire equipment certificate, an electrical certificate and emergency lighting certificate will continue to be obtained and its completion will be continued to be reported by the halls trustees annually via the chairman/trustees report given at each Annual General Meeting.

The Register of Record of Application can be viewed during office hours at Maidstone Borough Council Licensing Office, London House, 5/11 London Road, Maidstone, Kent ME16 8HR; or at www.digitalmaidstone/licensing

Representation shall be made in writing by – **19th October 2016**

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine (£5,000) for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence.



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Eight drivers eye touring car title

Brands Hatch set to host tightest ever final as BTCC arrives



READY: The Wrotham-based Motorbase team are looking to win a first ever title as the season ends at their local circuit

Motorsport

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

THE Wrotham-based Motorbase team are in strong contention to take the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) title as a Kent circuit plays host to the season finale.

All eyes will be on Brands Hatch this weekend as the UK's top racing drivers take to the track for the culmination of a season that has already produced a record 12 different winners.

Now an unprecedented eight drivers will head to the popular circuit at Longfield, near Swanley, with a shot

of the title.

The top five are within 21 points – the same as a race win – and there are a total of 67 on offer this weekend.

The championship standings are currently led by Sam Tordoff, from Sunbury-on-Thames-based WSR, but team-mate Rob Collard is also within reach and neither have won the title before.

The pair are under immediate threat from reigning champion Gordon Shedden, who won in dramatic style at Brands Hatch last year, plus his Honda team-mate and triple champion Matt Neal.

But Motorbase, based just three miles from the circuit, will fancy their chances on home turf, with Mat Jackson just 21 points off the title lead, while former champion Andrew Jor-

dan is only ten behind his team-mate.

Motorbase team boss Dave Bartrum said: "It's fantastic to have both drivers in with a chance for the overall title.

"We've got two great drivers in Andrew and Mat and the proof of that is our position in the standings.

"There's no pressure on us at this stage heading into the final – whatever we do, we're still relying on the results of the others.

"As we all know though, it's the BTCC so anything can happen.

"It's great for Motorbase to be in the title fight in our own back yard as well – Brands Hatch is our local circuit, being a stone's throw away makes it a great weekend and hopefully we'll have plenty of local support."

West Indies to visit county on tour next year

Cricket

THE West Indies will visit Canterbury next summer for a three-day tour match against Kent.

Taking place between August 6 and 8 at The Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence, the fixture is likely to be part of the 166th Canterbury Cricket Week and will be included in 2017 All Rounder and Championship Plus memberships.

Kent cricket CEO Jamie Clifford said: "We have a proud history of Caribbean cricketers at the club including John Shepherd, Bernard Julien, Eldine Baptiste and Carl Hooper so to welcome the exciting West Indies to Canterbury will be a great occasion for our supporters.

"Memberships and ticket packages



HOME: Kent's Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence

are already selling well on the back of an encouraging season and we hope to see lots of new and old faces

for a fantastic match."

As part a busy international summer, Canterbury will also host a four-day Test match between England Lions and South Africa A in June 21-24.

The full county fixture list for 2017 will be announced later this year with the Royal London One-Day Cup held in early season and the T20 Blast taking place in July and August.

Earlier this week, Kent skipper Sam Northeast was named as the club's player of the year for 2016.

He was joined on the title by Suzie Bates who won the women's team equivalent at the Spitfire Kent Cricket Awards.

Daniel Bell-Drummond was recognised as the one-day player of the year.

Olympic star Jackson returns to former club

HOLCOMBE Hockey Club have confirmed that international star player Ashley Jackson has left the club as of this week.

The 29-year-old, who was born in Chatham, joined the Rochester-based club at the start of last season, in what would go on to be an exciting 12 months for the experienced player.

Jackson was part of Great Britain's team for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games where, as the country's all-time top scorer, he was expected to lead the team to success.

But after returning from a largely disappointing campaign in Brazil, Jackson made it clear he wanted to return to former side, East Grinstead.

Chairman David South said following confirmation of the departure: "Ashley stepped away from his boyhood club last season, and found it difficult to be away from family and friends.

"We have amicably agreed with Ashley and East Grinstead Hockey Club for him to rejoin and hopefully enjoy his hockey once again".



DEPARTURE: Ashley Jackson



BATTLE: Gravesend's Kane Baker in action. Photo by Samantha Wordie

Baker turns up heat to secure regional crown

PROMISING Gravesend fighter Kane Baker landed a regional light-middleweight title on Saturday after overcoming veteran Lee Cannon in the Queensbury Boxing League.

In a fight many found difficult to predict beforehand, Baker 22, rose to the challenge at Epsom Downs Racecourse in Surrey.

"I knew Lee was going to try to outwork me, so I drilled it into myself

that work rate was the key," he said.

"In all I trained for 12 weeks at Pound 4 Pound Gym in Dartford to prepare for the biggest fight of my career and it showed.

"I felt strong all the way through and the fight went exactly the way I thought it would.

"At the end I knew I'd won and I could see it in his face that he agreed."

£1m boost for grassroots sport

A £1m changing room pavilion will be opened in Ashford next weekend.

Mayor George Kooware, will open the borough council's new facility on Saturday, October 8, at 11am after a £470,000 grant from the Premier League & The FA Facilities Fund made the project possible.

The grant has enabled the council to replace its previous 50-year-old changing accommodation with a

new state-of-the-art pavilion, comprising six team changing rooms, two officials' changing rooms, a clubroom, kitchen facilities and spectator toilets.

The new facility will be used by a range of local grassroots sports teams including Ashford Angels Football Club and Ashford United youth teams, and is projected to raise on-site participation by 175 per cent.

Keep up-to-date with all Kent's sports news via social media on:
 Twitter @KentSport Facebook www.facebook.com/kentsport.3



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